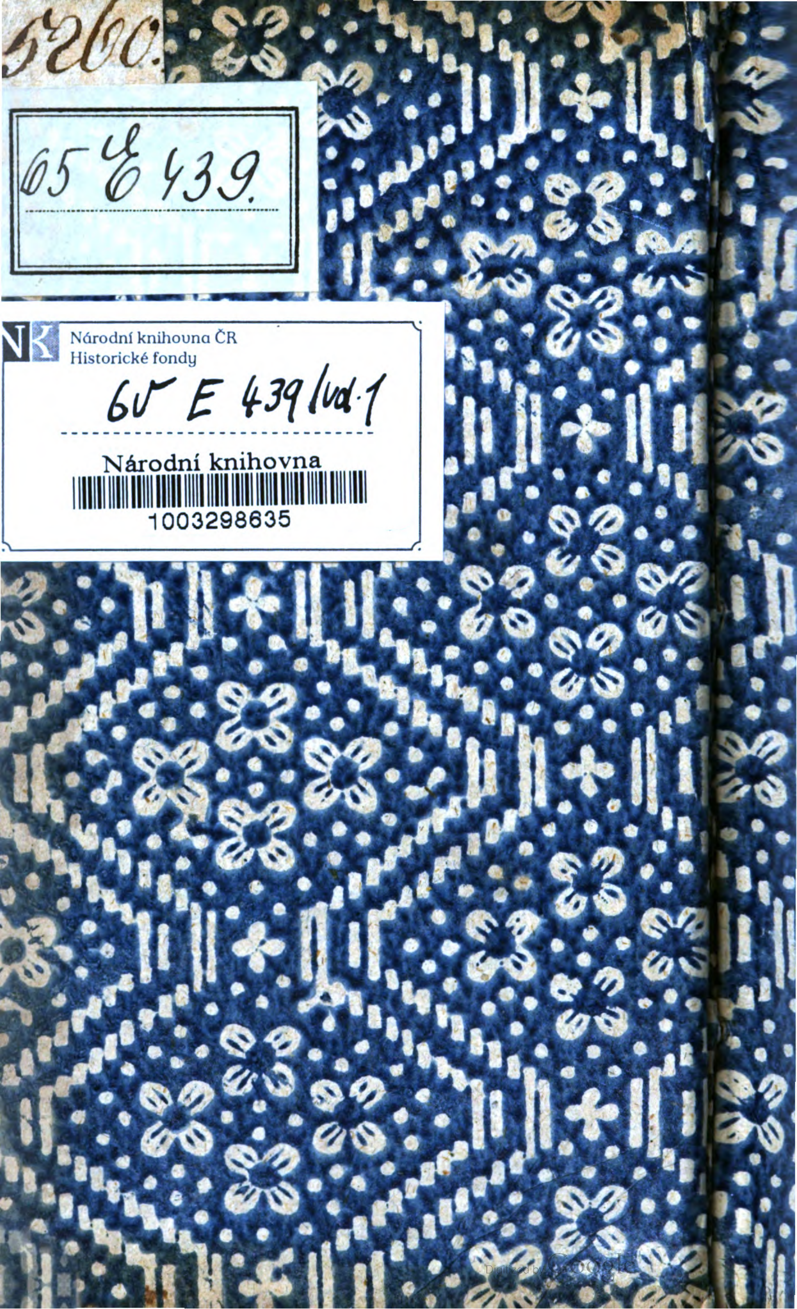

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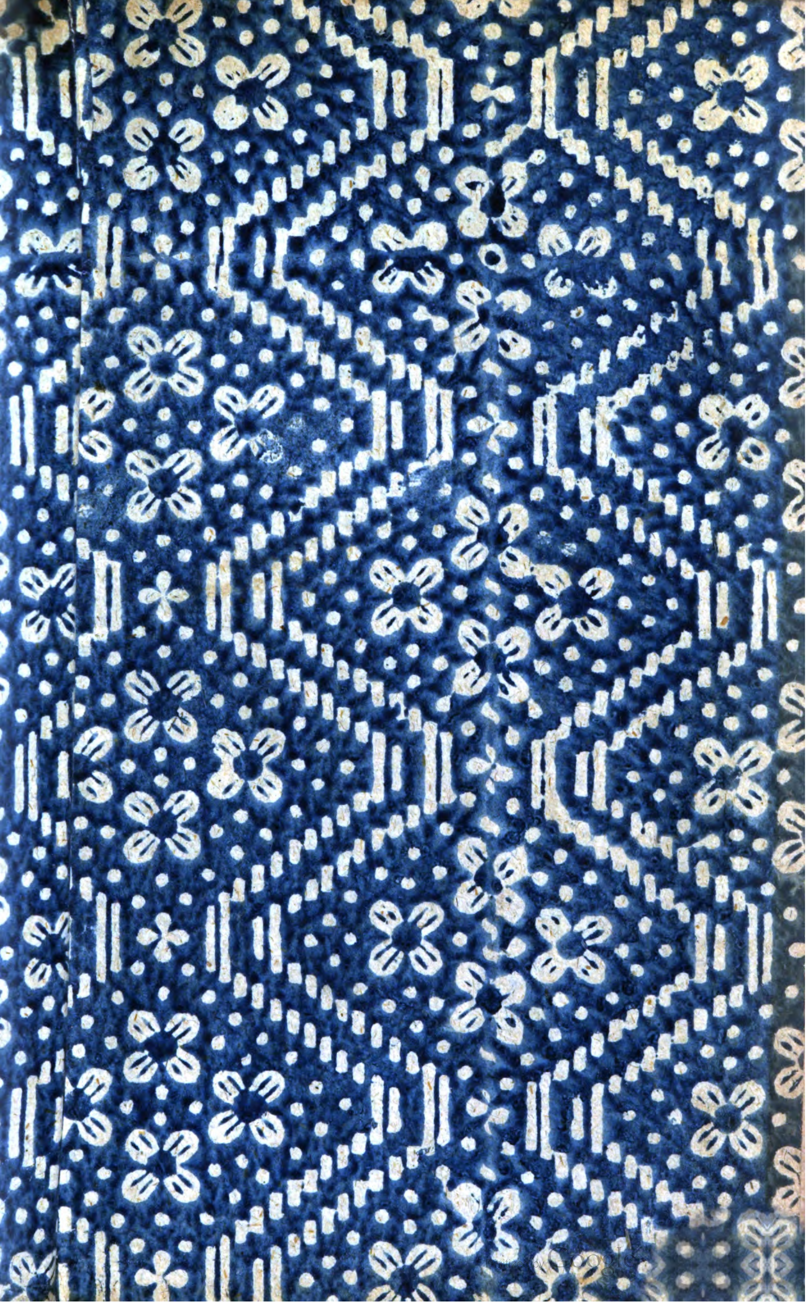

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THE

WORKS

OF

HENRY FIELDING.

VOLUME FIRST.

KNIHOVNA v PRAZE • NÁR.

THE

WORKS

OF

HENRY FIELDING, Eſq;

IN

TWELVE VOLUMES.

WITH

The LIFE of the AUTHOR.

VOLUME the FIRST.

LONDON:
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THE

LIFE

OF

HENRY FIELDING, Eſq;

Chiefly extracted from a Work entitled,

THE COMPANION TO THE PLAY-HOUSE;

AND THE

REVIEWS AND MAGAZINES for 1764.

THE

LIFE

OF

HENRY FIELDING, Eſq;

HENRY FIELDING was born at Sharpham Park in Somerſetſhire, April 22d 1707. His father, Edmund Fielding, Eſq; ſerved in the wars under the Duke of Marlborough, and, towards the cloſe of the reign of King George I. or acceſſion of K. George II. was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant-General. He was grandſon to an Earl of Denbigh, nearly related to the Duke of Kingſton, and many other noble and reſpectable families. His mother was daughter to Judge Gold, and aunt to Sir Henry Gold, one of the barons of exchequer. By theſe his parents he had four ſiſters, Catharine, Urſula, Sarah, and Beatrice, and one brother, Edmund, who was an officer in the marine ſervice. Sarah Fielding, his third ſiſter, is well known to the literary world, by the proofs ſhe has given of a lively and penetrating genius in *David Simple*, *The Counteſs of Delwine*, *The Cry*, and other ingenious performances. Our author's mother having paid her debt to Nature, Lieut.-General Fielding married a ſecond time, and the iſſue of that marriage were ſix ſons, all of whom are dead, excepting Sir John, now in the commiſſion of the peace for the counties of Middleſex, Surry, Eſſex, and the liberties of Weſtminſter.

Our Author received the firſt rudiments of his education at home, under the care of the Rev. Mr Oliver, for whom he ſeems to have had no very great regard, as he is ſaid to have deſigned

ſigned a portrait of his character in the very humorous, yet deteſtable one of parſon *Trulliber*, in his *Joſeph Andrews.*

When taken from under this gentleman's charge, he was removed to Eton ſchool, where he had an opportunity of cultivating a very early intimacy with Lord Lyttleton, Mr Fox, Mr Pitt, Sir Charles-Hanbury Williams, and many other reſpectable characters, who ever through life maintained a warm regard for him. But theſe were not the only advantages he reaped at that great ſeminary of education; for by an aſſiduous application to ſtudy, and the poſſeſſion of ſtrong and peculiar talents, he became, before he left that ſchool, uncommonly verſed in the Greek authors, and a perfect maſter of the Latin claſſics. Thus accompliſhed, at about eighteen years of age he left Eton, and went to Leyden, where he ſtudied under the moſt celebrated civilians for about two years, at the expiration of which time, remittances failing, he was obliged to return to London, not then quite twenty years of age.

The fact was, General Fielding, with very good inclinations to ſupport his ſon in the handſomeſt manner, ſoon found it impracticable (his family being greatly increaſed by a ſecond marriage), to make ſuch appointments for him as he could have wiſhed; the utmoſt that he was able to afford him being no more than two hundred pounds a-year; *which any body* (as our author himſelf uſed to ſay), *might pay that would.* With which ſlender income, a ſtrong conſtitution, a lively imagination, and a diſpoſition naturally but little formed for œconomy, he found himſelf his own maſter, in a place too, where the temptations to every expenſive pleaſure are ſo numerous, and the means of gratifying them ſo eaſily attainable. From this unfortunately pleaſing ſituation ſprung all thoſe inconveniencies, which attended Mr Fielding throughout the remainder of his life. The brilliancy of his wit, the vivacity of his humour, and his high reliſh of ſocial enjoyment, ſoon brought him into requeſt with the men of taſte and literature, and with the voluptuous of all ranks; and he ſoon found that his finances were by no means adequate to the frequent draughts made on him, from the conſequences of the briſk career of diſſipation which he had launched into; yet, as diſagreeable impreſſions never continued long upon his mind, but only, on the contrary, rouzed him to ſtruggle through his difficulties with the greater ſpirit and magnanimity, he flattered himſelf, that he ſhould find reſources in his wit and invention, and accordingly commenced a writer for the ſtage in 1727, at which time he had only attained the completion of his twentieth year.

His firſt attempt in the drama was a piece called *Love in ſeveral Maſques;* which, tho' it ſucceeded the long and crowded run of the *Provok'd Husband,* met with a favourable reception, as did likewiſe his ſecond play, which came out in the following year, and was entitled, *The Temple Beau.* He did not, however, meet with equal ſucceſs in all his dramatic works *; for he has even printed in the title-page of one of his farces, *As it was* damn'd *at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane;* and he himſelf informs us, in the general preface to his miſcellanies, that for *The Wedding Day*, though acted ſix nights, his profits did not exceed fifty pounds. Nor did a much better fate † attend ſome of his more early productions: but the ſeverity of the public, and the malice of his enemies, met with a noble alleviation from the patronage of the late Duke of Richmond, John Duke of Argyle, the late Duke of Roxburough, and many perſons of diſtinguiſhed rank and character; among whom may be numbered the preſent Lord Lyttleton, whoſe friendſhip to our author ſoftened the rigour of his misfortunes, while he lived, and exerted itſelf towards his memory, when he was no more, by taking pains to clear up imputations of a particular kind, which had been thrown out againſt his character.

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* There is not a play in the whole collection, which is not remarkable for ſome degree of merit very ſtriking in its kind: in general, there prevails a fine idea of character; occaſionally, we ſee the true comic both of ſituation and ſentiment; and always we find a ſtrong knowledge of life, delivered indeed with a cauſtic wit, but often zeſted with fine effuſions of the ridiculous: ſo that, upon the whole, the plays and farces of our author are well worthy of a place in this general edition of his works; and the reader, who peruſes them attentively, will not only carry away with him many uſeful diſcoveries of the foibles, affectations, and humours of mankind, but will alſo agree with me, that inferior productions are now ſucceſsful on the ſtage. MURPHY's *Eſſay on the Life and Genius of* H. Fielding, *Eſq.*

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† To other cauſes of our author's failure in the province of the drama, may be added, (ſays Mr Murphy), that ſovereign contempt he always entertained for the generality of mankind. It was in vain to tell him, that a particular ſcene was dangerous on account of its coarſeneſs, or becauſe it retarded the general buſineſs with feeble efforts of wit. He doubted the diſcernment of his audience, and ſo thought himſelf ſecured by their ſtupidity, if not by his own humour and vivacity. A very remarkable inſtance of this diſpoſition appeared, when the comedy of the *Wedding Day* was put into rehearſal. An actor, who was principally concerned in the piece, and, though young, was then, by the advantages of happy requiſites, an early favourite of the public, told Mr Fielding he was apprehenſive that the audience would make free with him in a particular paſſage; adding, that a repulſe might ſo flurry his ſpirits, as to diſconcert him for the reſt of the night; and therefore begged that it might be omitted. "No, d——mn them," replied the bard, "if the ſcene is not a good one, let them "find *that* out." Accordingly the play was brought on without alteration, and, juſt as had been foreſeen, the diſapprobation of the houſe was provoked at the paſſage before objected to; and the performer, alarmed and uneaſy at the hiſſes he had met with, retired into the green-

room, where the author was indulging his genius, and ſolacing himſelf with a bottle of champaign. He had by this time drank pretty plentifully; and cocking his eye at the actor, while ſtreams of tobacco trickled down from the corner of his mouth, *What's the matter, Garrick?* ſays he: *What are they hiſſing now?* Why, the ſcene I begged you to retrench; I knew it would not do; and they have ſo frighten'd me, that I ſhall not be able to recollect myſelf again the whole night. *Oh! d—mn 'em*, replies the author, *they* HAVE *found it out; have they?* Ibid.

It would be deviating from the intention of this eſſay, ſhould we attempt to analyſe the ſeveral dramatic compoſitions of this author; for he confeſſedly did not attain to pre-eminence in this branch of writing: it may be ſufficient, therefore, to obſerve, that, from the year 1727 to the end of 1736, almoſt all his plays and farces were written, not above two or three having appeared ſince that time. No ſelection has been made of thoſe pieces, but they are all printed together in this edition, that the public might have the *entire theatre* of Henry Fielding, Eſq.

Of our author's other works, ſuch particularly as were written before his genius was come to its full growth, an account will naturally be expected in this place; and fortunately he has ſpoken of them himſelf, in terms ſo modeſt and ſenſible, that the reader will diſpenſe with any other criticiſm or analyſis of them.

“ The *Eſſay on Converſation*,” ſays Mr Fielding, “ was deſigned to ridicule out “ of ſociety one of the moſt pernicious “ evils which attend it, viz. pampering the groſs appetites of ſelfiſhneſs “ and ill-nature with the ſhame and diſquietude of others; whereas true “ good-breeding conſiſts in contributing to the ſatisfaction and happineſs “ of all about us.”

The *Eſſay on the Knowledge of the* “ *Characters of Men* expoſes a ſecond “ great evil, namely, hypocriſy: the “ bane of all virtue, morality, and goodneſs; and may ſerve to arm the honeſt, undeſigning, open-hearted man, “ who is generally the prey of this “ monſter, againſt it.”

The *Journey from this World to the Next*, it ſhould ſeem, provoked the dull, ſhort-ſighted, and malignant enemies of our author, to charge him with an intention to ſubvert the ſettled notions of mankind in philoſophy and religion:

for he aſſures us, in form, that he did not intend, in this allegorical piece, “ to oppoſe any prevailing ſyſtem, or “ to erect a new one of his own.” With greater juſtice, he adds, “ that he might “ be arraigned of ignorance, for having, “ in the relation which he has put into the mouth of Julian, whom they “ call the apoſtate, done many violen- “ ces to hiſtory, and mixed truth and “ falſehood with much freedom. But “ he profeſſed fiction; and though he “ choſe ſome facts out of hiſtory, to “ embelliſh his work, and fix a chronology to it, he has not, however, con- “ fined himſelf to nice exactneſs, hav- “ ing often ante-dated, and ſometimes “ poſt-dated, the matter which he “ found in the Spaniſh hiſtory, and “ tranſplanted into his work.”

With regard to the Hiſtory of *Jonathan Wild*, his deſign, he tells us, was not “ to enter the liſt with that excel- “ lent hiſtorian, who, from authentic “ papers and records, &c. hath given ſo

" ſatisfactory an account of this great
" man: nor yet to contend with the
" memoirs of the Ordinary of Newgate,
" which generally contain a more
" particular relation of what the heroes
" are to ſuffer in the next world, than
" of what they did in this. The Hiſtory
" of Jonathan Wild is rather a narrative
" of ſuch actions as he might
" have performed, or would or ſhould
" have performed, than what he really
" did; and may, in reality, as well
" ſuit any other great man, as the
" perſon himſelf whoſe name it bears.
" As it is not a very faithful portrait
" of *Jonathan Wild*, ſo neither is it
" intended to repreſent the features
" of any other perſon; roguery, and
" not a rogue, is the ſubject; ſo that
" any particular application will be unfair
" in the reader, eſpecially if he
" knows much of the great world,
" ſince he muſt then be acquainted
" with more than one on whom he can
" fix the reſemblance."

About ſix or ſeven years after Mr Fielding's commencing a writer for the ſtage, he fell in love with and married one Miſs Craddock, a young lady from Saliſbury, poſſeſſed of a very great ſhare of beauty, and a fortune of fifteen hundred pounds; and his mother dying much about the ſame time, an eſtate at Stower in Dorſetſhire, of ſomewhat better than two hundred pounds *per annum*, came into his poſſeſſion. With this fortune, which, had it been conducted with prudence and œconomy, might have ſecured to him a ſtate of independence for life, and with the helps it might have derived from the productions of a genius unincumbered with anxieties and perplexity, might have even afforded him an affluent income; with this, I ſay, and a wife whom he was fond of to diſtraction, and for whoſe ſake he had taken up a reſolution of bidding adieu to all the follies and intemperances to which he had addicted himſelf in that ſhort but rapid career of a town life which he had run, he determined to retire to his country ſeat, and there reſide entirely.

But here, in ſpite of this prudent reſolution, one folly only took place of another, and family pride now brought on him all the inconveniencies in one place, that youthful diſſipation and libertiniſm had done in another. The income he poſſeſſed, though ſufficient for eaſe, and even ſome degree of elegance, was in no reſpect adequate to the ſupport either of luxury or ſplendour. Yet fond of figure and magnificence, he incumbered himſelf with a large retinue of ſervants, and his natural turn leading him to a fondneſs for the delights of ſociety and convivial mirth, he threw wide open the gates of hoſpitality, and ſuffered his whole patrimony to be devoured by hounds, horſes, and entertainments. In ſhort, in leſs than three years, from the mere paſſion of being eſteemed a man of fortune, he reduced himſelf to the diſpleaſing ſituation of having no fortune at all; and through an ambition of maintaining an open houſe for the reception of *every one elſe*, he ſoon found *himſelf* without a habitation which he could call his own. In a word, by a deſire, as Shakeſpeare expreſſes it,

> ——*of ſhewing a more ſwelling port*
> *Than his faint means would grant continuance,*

he was, in the courſe of a very ſhort period, brought back to the ſame unfortunate ſituation which he had before experienced; but with this aggravation to it, that he could now have none of thoſe reſourecs in future to look forward to, which he had thus indiſcreetly laviſhed. He had undermined his own ſupport, and had now nothing but his own abilities to depend on for the recovery of what he had ſo wantonly thrown from him, an eaſy competence. Not diſcouraged, however, he determined to exert his beſt abilities, betook himſelf cloſely to the ſtudy of the law, and, after the cuſtomary time of probation at the

Temple, being called to the bar, made no inconſiderable figure in Weſtminſter-Hall.

To the practice of the law Mr Fielding now applied himſelf with great aſſiduity, both in the courts at London, and on the circuits, ſo long as his health permitted; and it is probable would have riſen to a conſiderable degree of eminence in it, had not the intemperances of his early parts of life put a check, by their conſequences, to the progreſs of his ſucceſs. In ſhort, tho' but a young man, he began now to be moleſted with ſuch violent attacks from the gout, as rendered it impoſſible for him to be as conſtant at the bar as the laborioufneſs of his profeſſion required, and would only permit him to purſue the law by ſnatches, at ſuch intervals as were free from indiſpoſition. However, under theſe united ſeverities of pain and want, he ſtill found reſources in his genius and abilities. He was concerned in a political periodical paper, called the *Champion*, which owed its principal ſupport to his pen: a pen which ſeems never to have lain idle, ſince it was perpetually producing, almoſt as it were extempore, a play, a farce, a pamphlet, or a newſpaper; but whoſe full exertion of power ſeemed reſerved for a kind of writing different from, and indeed ſuperior to them all; nor will it be neceſſary to ſay more in ſupport of this aſſertion, than to mention his celebrated novels of *Joſeph Andrews* *, *Tom Jones*, and *Amelia*. But as this means of ſubſiſtence was evidently pracarious, it was ſcarcely poſſible he ſhould be enabled by it to recover his ſhattered fortunes:

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* Joſeph Andrews, as the preface to the work informs us, was intended for an imitation of the ſtile and manner of Cervantes: and how delightfully he has copied the humour, the gravity, and the fine ridicule of his maſter, they can witneſs who are acquainted with both writers. The truth is, Fielding, in this performance, was employed in the very province for which his talents were peculiarly and happily formed: namely, the fabulous narration of ſome imagined action, which did occur, or might probably have occurred in human life.

life. Nothing could be more happily conceived than the character of Parſon Adams for the principal perſonage of the work; the humanity and benevolence of affection, the goodneſs of heart, and the zeal for virtue, which come from him upon all occaſions, attach us to Mr Adams in the moſt endearing manner; his excellent talents, his erudition, and his real acquirements of knowledge in claſſical antiquity, and the Sacred writings, together with his honeſty, command our eſteem and reſpect; while his ſimplicity and innocence in the ways of men provoke our ſmiles, by the contraſt they bear to his real intellectual character, and conduce to make him in the higheſt manner the object of mirth, without degrading him in our eſtimation, by the many ridiculous embaraſſments to which they every now and then make him liable: and, to crown the whole, that habitual abſence of mind, which is his predominant foible, and which never fails to give a tinge to whatever he is about, make the honeſt clergyman a rival of the renowned Don Quixote. The whole work, indeed, abounds with ſituations of the truly comic kind; the incidents and characters are unfolded with fine turns of ſurpriſe; and it is among the few works of invention, produced by our Engliſh writers, which will always continue in requeſt, ſo long as people of taſte remain.

he was therefore at length obliged to accept of the office of an acting magiſtrate in the Commiſſion of the Peace for the County of Middleſex; an office which ſeldom fails of being hateful to the populace, and of courſe liable to many infamous and unjuſt imputations, particularly that of venality: a charge which the ill-natured world, not unacquainted with Mr Fielding's want of œconomy, and paſſion for expence, were but too ready to caſt upon him. But the candid reader will recollect, that the charge of venality never ceaſes to be exhibited againſt abilities in diſtreſs, which was our Author's lot in the firſt ſtage of his life, and that the firſt magiſtrate for Weſtminſter is ever liable to imputations. But it will be the more humane and generous office, to ſet down to the account of ſlander and defamation a great part of that abuſe which was diſcharged againſt him by his enemies in his lifetime, deducing, however, from the whole this uſeful leſſon, *That* *quick and warm paſſions ſhould be early controlled, and that diſſipation and extravagant pleaſures, are the moſt dangerous palliatives that can be found for diſappointments and vexations in the firſt ſtages of life.*

Amidſt theſe ſevere exerciſes of his underſtanding, however, and all the laborious duties of his office, his invention could not ly ſtill; but he found leiſure to amuſe himſelf, and afterwards the world, with the Hiſtory of *Tom Jones*. "If we conſider this work," (ſays Mr Murphy), "in the ſame light in which the ableſt critics have examined the *Iliad*, the *Æneid*, and the *Paradiſe Loſt*, namely, with a view to the fable, the manners, the ſentiments, and the ſtile, we ſhall find it ſtanding the teſt of the ſevereſt criticiſm, and bearing away the envied praiſe of a complete performance. In the firſt place, the action has that unity, which is the boaſt of the great models of compoſition; it turns upon a ſingle event, attended with many circumſtances, and many ſubordinate incidents, which ſeem, in the progreſs of the work, to perplex, entangle, and involve the whole in difficulties, and lead on the reader's imagination, through ſcenes of prodigious variety, till the different intricacies and complications of the fable are explained, after the ſame gradual manner in which they had been worked up into a criſis: incident ariſes out of incident; the ſeeds of every thing that ſhoots up, are laid with a judicious hand, and whatever occurs in the latter part of the ſtory ſeems naturally to grow out of thoſe paſſages which preceded; ſo that upon the whole, the buſineſs, with great proprety and probability, works itſelf up into various embaraſſments, and then, afterwards, by a regular ſeries of events, clears itſelf from all impediments, and brings itſelf inevitably to a concluſion. By this artful management our Author hath given us the perfection of fable; which, as the writers upon the ſubject have juſtly obſerved, conſiſts in ſuch obſtacles to retard the final iſſue of the whole, as ſhall, at leaſt, in their conſequences, accelerate the cataſtrophe, and bring it evidently and neceſſarily to that period only, which, in the nature of things, could ariſe from it; ſo that the action could not remain in ſuſpenſe any longer, but muſt naturally cloſe and determine itſelf. In ſhort, all the characters down to Partridge, and even to a maid or an hoſtler at an inn, are drawn with truth and humour. They look, act, nay, ſpeak, to our imaginations exactly as they appear to us in the world. The ſentiments which they utter are peculiarly annexed to their habits, paſſions, and ideas, which is what Poetical Propriety requires; and, to the honour of our Author it muſt be ſaid, that whenever he addreſſes us in perſon, he is always in the intereſts of virtue and religion, and inſpires, in a ſtrain of moral reflection, a true love of goodneſs and honour, with a juſt deteſtation of impoſture, hypocriſy, and all ſpecious pretences to uprightneſs. And hence it aroſe, from this *truth of character* which prevails in *Tom Jones*, in conjunction with other qualities of the writer, that the ſuffrage of the moſt *learned* critic of this nation [Dr *Warburton*,] was given to our author, when he ſays, "Monſ. de Marivaux in France, and Mr Fielding in England, ſtand the foremoſt among thoſe who have given a *faithful* and *chaſte* copy of *life* and *manners*, and by enriching their romance with the beſt part of the comic art, may be ſaid to have brought it to perfection." Such a favourable deciſion, from ſo able a judge, will do honour to Mr Fielding with poſterity; and the excellent genius of the perſon, with whom he has parallelled him, will reflect the trueſt praiſe on the author, who was capable of being his illuſtrious rival.

Thus we have traced our author in his progreſs, to the time when the vigour of his mind was in its full growth of perfection; from this period it ſunk, but by ſlow degrees, into a decline: *Amelia*, which ſucceeded Tom Jones in about four years, has indeed the marks of genius, but of a genius beginning to fall into decay. The author's invention ſtill appears to retain its fertility, and his judgment ſeems as ſtrong as ever; but the warmth of imagination is abated: in his landſcapes, or ſcenes of life, Mr Fielding is no longer the colouriſt he was before. Yet Amelia holds the ſame proportion to Tom Jones, that the Odyſſey of Homer bears, in the eſtimation of Longinus, to the Iliad. A fine vein of morality runs through the whole; many of the ſituations are affecting and tender; the ſentiments are delicate; and, upon the whole, it is the Odyſſey, the moral and pathetic work of Henry Fielding *.

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* It is proper the reader ſhould be informed, that Amelia, in this edition, is printed from a copy corrected by the author's own hand. The exceptionable paſſages, which inadvertency had thrown out, are here retrenched; and the work, upon the whole, will be found nearer perfection than it was in its original ſtate.

While he was planning and executing this piece, it ſhould be remembered, that he was diſtracted by that multiplicity of avocations which ſurround a public magiſtrate; and his conſtitution, already greatly impaired and enfeebled, was now ſo entirely ſhattered by continual inroads of complicated diſorders, that, by advice of his phyſicians, he was obliged to ſet out for Liſbon, to try if there was any reſtorative quality in the more genial air of that climate; but in two months after his arrival at that place, he yielded his laſt breath, in the year 1754, and in the forty-eighth year of his age——And thus was cloſed a courſe of diſappointment, diſtreſs, vexation, infirmity, and ſtudy; for with each of theſe his life was variouſly chequered, and, perhaps, in ſtronger proportions than has been the lot of many.

He left behind him (for he married a ſecond time), a wife and four children, three of which are ſtill living, and now training up in a handſome courſe of education, under the care of their uncle.

Henry Fielding was in ſtature rather riſing above ſix feet; his frame of body large, and remarkably robuſt, till the gout had broke the vigour of his conſtitution. His paſſions were, as the poet expreſſes it, *tremblingly alive all o'er*. Whatever he deſired, he deſired ardently: he was alike impatient of diſappointment or ill-uſage; and the ſame quickneſs of ſenſibility rendered him elate in proſperity, and overflowing with gratitude at every inſtance of generoſity or friendſhip. Steady in his private attachments, his affection was warm, ſincere, and vehement: in his reſentments he was manly, but temperate, ſeldom breaking out, in his writings, into gratifications of ill-humour or perſonal ſatire. It is to the honour of thoſe whom he loved, that he had too much penetration to be deceived in their characters; and it was to the advantage of his enemies, that he was above paſſionate attacks upon them.—Open, unbounded, and ſocial in his temper, he had no regard for money; but, inclining to exceſs even in his virtues, he carried his contempt of avarice into the oppoſite extreme, imprudence. When young in life, he ſuffered a moderate eſtate to be devoured by hoſpitality; and, when in the decline of his days, and poſſeſſed of an income of near five hundred a-year, he knew no uſe of it, but to keep his table open to thoſe who had been his friends when young, and had impaired their own fortunes. A ſenſe of honour he had as lively and delicate as moſt men; but his paſſions were at times too turbulent for it, or rather his neceſſities were too preſſing. Whenever he departed from delicacy, his friends knew how his own feelings reprimanded him.

Upon the whole, (ſays his ingenious biographer, Mr *Murphy*), our author was unhappy, but not vicious, in his nature; in his underſtanding lively, yet ſolid;

rich in invention, yet a lover of real ſcience; an obſerver of mankind, yet a ſcholar of enlarged reading; a ſpirited enemy, yet an undefatigable friend; a ſatyriſt of vice and evil manners, yet a lover of mankind; an uſeful citizen; a poliſhed and inſtructive wit; and a magiſtrate zealous for the order and welfare of the community which he ſerved.

Such was the man, and ſuch the author, whoſe works we now offer to the public. Of this undertaking we ſhall only ſay that the publiſhers were above taking advantage of the author's eſtabliſhed reputation to enhance the price, but ſtudied principally to ſend it into the world at as cheap a purchaſe as poſſible. Every thing which has been printed in the London quarto edition, ſold for five guineas, is included in this new edition, which, it is hoped, will merit the approbation of the public.

EDINBURGH, 1768.

LOVE

IN

SEVERAL MASQUES.

A

COMEDY.

First acted in 1727.

Nec, Veneris Pharetris macer eſt, nec Lampade fervet;
Inde faces ardent; veniunt a dote ſagittæ.
Juv. Sat. 6.

TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE THE LADY
MARY WORTLEY MONTAGUE.

MADAM,

YOUR ladyſhip's known goodneſs gives my preſumption the hopes of a pardon, for prefixing to this ſlight work the name of a lady, whoſe accurate judgment has long been the glory of her own ſex, and the wonder of ours: eſpecially, ſince it aroſe from a vanity, to which your indulgence, on the firſt peruſal of it, gave birth.

I would not inſinuate to the world that this play paſt free from your cenſure; ſince I know it not free from faults, not one of which eſcaped your immediate penetration. Immediate indeed! for your judgment keeps pace with your eye, and you comprehend almoſt faſter than others overlook.

This is a perfection very viſible to all who are admitted to the honour of your converſation: ſince, from thoſe ſhort intervals you can be ſuppoſed to have had to yourſelf, amid the importunities of all the polite admirers and profeſſors of wit and learning, you are capable of inſtructing the pedant, and are at once a living confutation of thoſe moroſe ſchoolmen who would confine knowledge to the male part of the ſpecies, and a ſhining inſtance of thoſe perfections and ſofter graces which nature has confined to the female.

But I offend your ladyſhip, whilſt I pleaſe myſelf and the reader; therefore I ſhall only beg your leave to give a ſanction to this Comedy, by informing the world that its repreſentation was twice honoured with your ladyſhip's preſence, and am, with the greateſt reſpect,

MADAM,

Your ladyſhip's moſt obedient

moſt humble ſervant,

HENRY FIELDING.

PREFACE.

I Believe few plays have ever adventured into the world under greater diſadvantages than this. Firſt, as it ſucceeded a comedy, which, for the continued ſpace of twenty-eight nights, received as great (and as juſt) applauſes, as ever were beſtowed on the Engliſh theatre. And, ſecondly, as it is contemporary with an entertainment which engroſſes the whole talk and admiration of the town.

Theſe were difficulties which ſeemed rather to require the ſuperior force of a WYCHERLY, or a CONGREVE, than of a raw and unexperienced pen, (for I believe I may boaſt, that none ever appeared ſo early on the ſtage.) However, ſuch was the candour of the audience, the play was received with greater ſatisfaction than I ſhould have promiſed myſelf from its merit, had it even preceded the PROVOK'D HUSBAND.

But, after having returned thanks to the ſpectators, I cannot reſt till I have been in ſome meaſure grateful to the performers. As for Mr WILKS and Mr CIBBER, I cannot ſufficiently acknowledge their civil and kind behaviour, previous to it repreſentation. How advantageouſly both they and the other perſonages ſet off their reſpective parts at that time, has been ſpoken of by much politer and better judges than myſelf.

Laſtly, I can never expreſs my grateful ſenſe of the good-nature of Mrs OLDFIELD; who, though ſhe had contracted a ſlight indiſpoſition by her violent fatigue in the part of Lady TOWNLY, was prevailed on to grace that of Lady MATCHLESS; which placed her in a light ſo far inferior to that which ſhe had in the other. Nor do I owe leſs to her excellent judgment, ſhewn in ſome corrections, which I ſhall, for my own ſake, conceal. But the raviſhing perfections of this lady are ſo much the admiration of every eye, and every ear, that they will remain fixed in the memory of many, when theſe light ſcenes ſhall be forgotten.

PROLOGUE.

Occaſioned by this Comedy's ſucceeding that of the PROVOK'D HUSBAND.

Spoken by Mr MILLS.

AS when a RAPHAEL's *maſter-piece has been*
By the aſtoniſh'd judge with rapture ſeen,
Shou'd ſome young artiſt next his picture ſhow,
He ſpeaks his colours faint, his fancy low;
Though it ſome beauties has, it ſtill muſt fall,
Compar'd to that, which has excell'd in all:
So when, by an admiring, raviſh'd age
A finiſh'd piece is plauded on the ſtage,
What fate alas! muſt a young author ſhare,
Who, deaf to all intreaties, ventures there?
Yet, too too certain of his weaker cauſe,
He claims nor equal merit, nor applauſe.
Compare 'em not: ſhould favour do its moſt,
He owns, by the compariſon he's loſt.
Light airy ſcenes, his comic muſe diſplays,
Far from the buſkin's higher vein he ſtrays,
By humour only catching at the bays:
Humour ſtill free from an indecent flame,
Which ſhould it raiſe your mirth, muſt raiſe your ſhame:
Indecency's the bane to ridicule,
And only charms the libertine, or fool:
Nought ſhall offend the fair ones' ears to-day,
Which they might bluſh to hear, or bluſh to ſay.
No private character theſe ſcenes expoſe,
Our bard at vice, not at the vicious, throws.
If any by his pointed arrows ſmart,
Why did he bear the mark within his heart?
While innocently, thus, to pleaſe he aims,
Some merit, ſurely, the intention claims;
With candour, critics, to his cauſe attend;
Let pity to his lighter errors bend,
Forgive at leaſt, but, if you can, commend.

DRAMATIS

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

WISEMORE,	Mr Mills.
MERITAL,	Mr Wilks.
MALVIL,	Mr Bridgewater.
Lord FORMAL,	Mr Griffin.
RATTLE,	Mr Cibber.
Sir POSITIVE TRAP,	Mr Harper.
Sir APISH SIMPLE,	Mr Miller.

WOMEN.

Lady MATCHLESS,	Mrs Oldfield.
VERMILIA,	Mrs Porter.
HELENA,	Mrs Booth.
Lady TRAP,	Mrs Moor.
CATCHET,	Mrs Mills.

SCENE, LONDON.

LOVE

IN

SEVERAL MASQUES.

ACT I. SCENE I.

SCENE, *The Piazza.*

MERITAL, MALVIL.

MERITAL.

MR Malvil, good morrow; I thought the ſpirit of Champagne wou'd have lengthen'd your repoſe this morning.

Mal. No, Sir, the ſpirit of ſomething elſe diſturbs my mind too much: an unfortunate lover and repoſe are as oppoſite as any lover and ſenſe.

Mer. Malapert ſimile! What is there in life? what joys, what tranſports, which flow not from the ſpring of love. The birth of love is the birth of happineſs, nay, even of life; to breathe without it is to drag on a dull, phlegmatic, inſipid being, and ſtruggle imperfect in the womb of nature.

Malv. What in the name of fuſtian's here?

Mer. Did you not ſee the lady Matchleſs laſt night? what ecſtaſies did ſhe impart even at a diſtance to her beholders!

Malv. A beautiful, rich, young widow, in a front-box, makes as much noiſe, as a blazing-ſtar in the ſky; draws as many eyes on her, and is as much critiſed on in the polite world, as the other in the learned. With what envious glances was ſhe attacked by the whole circle of belles! and what amorous ones by the gentlemen proprietors of the toupet, ſnuff-box, and ſword-knot!

Mer. Nor could all this elevate her to the leaſt pride or haughtineſs; but ſhe carried it with an air not conſcious of the envy and adoration ſhe contracted. That becoming modeſty in her eyes! that lovely, eaſy ſweetneſs in her ſmile! that gracefulneſs in her mien! that nobleneſs, without affectation, in her looks! in ſhort, that one compleat charm in her perſon!—— Such a woman as this does as much miſchief amongſt the men of ſenſe——

Malv. As ſome beaus do amongſt the women of none. But, by your ſpeaking ſo feelingly, I ſhould ſuſpect ſome miſchief here. [*Claps* Merital's *breaſt.*

Mer. Why that fort is not impregnable to the batteries of a fair eye; but there is a certain beautiful, rich, young virgin who keeps guard there.

Malv. Ha! ſhe is a blazing-ſtar, indeed: where does ſhe live? or rather, where is ſhe worſhipped? and in what ſtreet is her temple?

Mer. I have deſcribed her, and ſure my picture is not ſo bad as to require its name under it.

Malv. But it is ſo good, that I am afraid you hardly took nature for a pattern.

Mer. Thou art always endeavouring to be ſatirical on the ladies: pr'ythee deſiſt; for the name of an ill-natured wit will ſlightly balance the loſs of their favour. Who would not prefer a dear ſmile from a pretty face——

Malv. To a frown from an ugly one—But have I never ſeen this ineſtimable?

Mer. No, Sir, the ſun has never ſeen her but by peeping through a window; ſhe is kept as cloſe as a jealous Spaniard keeps his wife, or a city-uſurer his treaſure; and is now brought to town to be married to that gay knight, Sir Apiſh Simple.

Malv. You have a rival then, there's one difficulty.

Mer. Ay, and many difficulties, which, in love, are ſo many charms. In the firſt place, the young lady's guardian, Sir Poſitive Trap by name, is an old, preciſe knight, made up of avarice, folly, an ill-bred ſurlineſs of temper, and an odd, fantaſtic pride built on the antiquity of his family, into which he enrolls moſt of the great men he ever heard of. The next is his lady, who is his abſolute empreſs: for tho' he be monſtrouſly moroſe to the reſt of the world, he is as fooliſhly eaſy and credulous to his wife.

Malv. And ſhe, I ſuppoſe, is as eaſy to the reſt of the world, as imperious to him.

Mer. Then my miſtreſs is made up of natural ſpirit, wit and fire; all theſe ſhe has improved by an intimate converſation with plays, poems, romances and ſuch gay ſtudies, by which ſhe has acquired a perfect knowledge of the polite world without ever ſeeing it, and turned the confinement of her perſon into the enlargement of her mind. Laſtly, my rival——but his character you know already. And theſe are my obſtacles.

Malv. But what objection does the old knight make to your pretenſions?

Mer. Several. My eſtate is too ſmall, my father was no baronet, and I am——no fool.

Malv. Theſe are weighty objections, I muſt confeſs: to evade the firſt, you muſt bribe his lawyer; to conquer the ſecond, purchaſe a title——and utterly to remove the laſt, plead lover.

Mer. Kindly adviſed. But what ſucceſs are you like to reap from that plea with Vermilia?

Malv. Why faith! our affair is grown dull as a chancery-ſuit; but, if it be much more prolix, my ſtock of love will be ſo far exhauſted, that I ſhall be like a conteſted heir who ſpends his eſtate in the purſuit of it, and, when his litigious adverſary is overthrown, finds his poſſeſſions reduced to a long lawyer's bill for more than he is able to pay.

Mer. But then your fates will be different, the one condemned to ſtarve in a priſon, the other to ſurfeit in matrimony. Tho' by what I ſee, you are in little danger of bringing matters to that iſſue.

Malv. Haſt thou ſeen? Come, perhaps you have diſcovered what, indeed, her late coldneſs gives me reaſon to fear.

Mer. What?

Malv. A rival.

Mer. Ha, ha, ha! you certainly are the moſt unfortunate in your temper, and moſt an enemy to yourſelf, of any man in the world. Be aſſured, Jack, that if after what has paſſed between you, ſo long a ſervice, and ſo many apparent ſigns of the ſincereſt paſſion on your ſide, and ſuch a manifeſt reception of it on hers, ſhe jilts you; ſhe yet has rid you of the greateſt peſt in nature.

Malv. 'Sdeath! cou'd I reaſon thus with myſelf, I might think ſo; but I love her above my reaſon; I ſee my folly, and deſpiſe it, and yet cannot ſhun it.

Mer. Well, you are the beſt in the claſs of romantic lovers. But, for my part, I wou'd as ſoon turn chymiſt and ſearch for the philoſopher's ſtone, as a lover to run headlong after an Ignis Fatuus, that flies the faſter the more it is purſued.

Malv. Theſe are the known ſentiments of you light, gay, fluttering fellows; who, like the weathercock, never fix long to a point, 'till you are good for nothing.

Mer. And you platonic lovers, like the compaſs, are ever pointing to the ſame pole, but never touch it.

Malv. You are a ſort of ſportſmen who are always hunting in a park of coquets, where your ſport is ſo plenty, that you ſtart freſh game before you have run down the old.

Mer. And you are a ſort of anglers ever fiſhing for prudes, who cautiouſly ſteal, and pamper up their vanity with your baits, but never ſwallow the hook.

Malv. But haſt thou then diſcovered any thing in Vermilia's conduct, that——?

Mer. That makes me confident you will never gain her, ſo I adviſe you to raiſe the ſiege; for you muſt carry that garriſon by ſtorm, and, I know, you have not ſo much bravery in love——Ha, amazement! is not that Wiſemore?

SCENE II.

WISEMORE, MERITAL, MALVIL.

Wiſem. Mr Merital, Mr Malvil, your humble ſervant; I am fortunate, indeed, at my firſt arrival to embrace my friends.

Malv. Dear Wiſemore, a thouſand welcomes; what propitious wind has drove thee to town?

Wiſem. No wind propitious to my inclination, I aſſure ye, gentlemen; I had taken leave of this place long ago, its vanities, hurries, and ſuperficial, empty, ill-digeſted pleaſures.

Mer. But you have ſeen your error, and, like a relenting nun who had too raſhly taken leave of the world, art returned to enjoy thy pleaſures again.

Wiſem. No, 'tis buſineſs, buſineſs, gentlemen, that drags me hither; my pleaſures lie another way, a way little known to you gentlemen of the town.

Malv. Not ſo little known as you imagine, Ned, nor have you been ſuppoſed alone theſe three years in the country. 'Tis no ſecret that you have had the converſation of——

Wiſem. ——The wiſe, the learned, the virtuous, Books, Sir, have been moſtly my companions, a ſociety preferable to that of this age. Who would converſe with fools and fops, whilſt they might enjoy a Cicero or an Epictetus, a Plato or an Ariſtotle? Who wou'd waſte his afternoons in a coffeehouſe, or at a tea-table, to be entertained with ſcandal, lies, balls, operas, intrigues, faſhions, flattery, nonſenſe, and that ſwarm of impertinences which compoſe the common-place chat of the world? Who would bear all this, did he know the ſweets of retirement?

Mer. Let me ſurvey thee a little, that I may be certain you are my old friend metamorphoſed, and no apparition.

Wiſem. Look ye, Sirs, of all places in the world, my ſpirit would never haunt this. London is to me, what the country is to a gay, giddy girl, pampered up with the love of admiration; or a young heir juſt leapt into his eſtate and chariot. It is a miſtreſs, whoſe imperfections I have diſcovered, and caſt off; I know it, I have been a ſpectator of all its ſcenes. I have ſeen hypocriſy paſs for religion, madneſs for ſenſe, noiſe and ſcurrility for wit, and riches for the whole train of virtues. Then I have ſeen folly beloved for youth and beauty, and reverenced for its age. I have diſcovered knavery in more forms than ever Proteus had, and traced them through them all, 'till I have lodg'd him behind a counter, with the ſtatute of bankruptcy in his hand, and a pair of gilded horns in his pocket.

Mer.
Malv. } Ha, ha, ha!

Wiſem. I know the folly, foppery, and childiſhneſs of your diverſions——I know your vices too.

Malv. And haſt practiſed them, to my knowledge.

Wiſem. So much the more have they contracted my hate. Oons! If I do not get out of this vile town in three days, I ſhall get out of the world in four.

Mer. But what earneſt buſineſs has drove thee hither now, ſo much againſt thy will?

Malv. He is married, his wife has drawn him hither, and he is jealous.

Mer. Or are you in law, and have been rid down this morning by a fat ſerjeant or ſollicitor?

Malv. He has been writing philoſophy, and is come to town to publiſh it.

Wiſem. I have been ſtudying folly, and am come to town to publiſh it. I know that title will ſell any productions; or ſome of your modern poets, who hardly merit that name by their works, wou'd merit it by ſtarving.

Mer. But they deal not ſo openly with the world, for they promiſe much tho' they perform little. Nay, I've ſometimes ſeen treatiſes where the author has put all his wit in the title-page.

Wiſem. Why, faith, and politic enough; for few readers now look farther than the title-page.

Mer. But pr'ythee what is this errand of folly, as you are pleaſed to term it?

Wiſem. O beyond conception; I ſhudder with the apprehenſion of its being known. But why do I fear it? folly or vice muſt be of a prodigious height to over-top the croud: but if it did, the tall, over-grown monſter would be admired, and, like other monſters, enrich the poſſeſſor. I ſee your women have gone through with the transformation, and dreſs like us; nay, they frequent coffee-houſes too; I was frightened from one juſt now by two girls in paduaſuay coats, and breeches.

Malv. Ha, ha, ha! theſe were two beaus, Ned.

Wiſem. So much the greater transformation, for they had, apparently, more of the woman than the man about them. But, perhaps, by them this amphibious dreſs may be a ſignificant calculation: for I have known a beau with every thing of a woman but the ſex, and nothing of a man beſides it.

Malv. They will eſteem you for that aſſertion.

Wiſem. Why, ay, it may recommend them to the tea-tables. For the natural perfections of our ſex, and the unnatural acquiſitions of her own, muſt be a rare compound to make a woman's idol.

Mer. Sure never was man ſo altered! Do not affect ſingularity this way; for in town, we look on none to be ſo great a fool as a philoſopher, and there is no fool ſo out of faſhion.

Wiſem. A certain ſign fools are in faſhion. Philoſophy is a true glaſs, which ſhews the imperfections of the mind as plain as the other of the body; and, no more than a true glaſs, can be agreeable to a town-conſtitution.

Mer. So, here comes one who will hit your taſte.—

SCENE III.

To them, RATTLE.

Rattle. Merital, Malvil, a buſs, dear boys. Ha! hum! what figure is that?

Mer. Mr Rattle, pray know my friend, Mr Wiſemore?

Rattle. That I will gladly. Sir, I am your moſt obedient humble ſervant, Sir.

Wiſem. Sir, I am very much yours.

Rattle. Well, I know you will be witty upon me, but ſince the town will blab, I will put on the armour of aſſurance, and declare boldly, that I am very, very deeply in love.

Malv. A bold declaration, indeed! and what may require ſome aſſurance to maintain, ſince it is ten to four, thou haſt never ſpoke to this new miſtreſs, nay, perhaps, never ſeen more of her than her picture.

Rattle. Her picture! ha, ha, ha, who can draw the ſun in its meridian glories! Neither painting, poetry, nor imagination can form her image. She is young and blooming as the ſpring, gay and teeming as the ſummer, ripe and rich as the autumn.

Malv. Thy chymiſtry has from that one virtue extracted all the reſt, I very modeſtly ſuppoſe.

Mer. You know, Harry, Malvil allows the ſex no virtues.

Rattle. That's becauſe they allow him no favours. But to expreſs my miſtreſs's worth, in a word, and prove it too——She is the Lady Matchleſs.

Wiſem. Ha! [*Aſide.*

Mer. But what hopes can you have of ſucceeding againſt the multitudes which ſwarm in her drawing-room?

Rattle. Pugh! Tom, you know I have ſucceeded againſt greater multitudes before now——and ſhe is a woman of excellent ſenſe.

Wiſem. You fix your hopes on a very ſound foundation, Sir; for a woman of ſenſe will, undoubtedly, ſet a juſt value on a laced coat, which qualification is undeniably yours.

Rattle. Sir, as I take it, there are other qualifications appertaining to——

Wiſem. But none preferable in the eyes of ſome women, and the perſons of ſome men, Sir.

Rattle. I believe ſhe will find ſome preferable in the perſon of your humble ſervant, Sir.

Wiſem. Say you ſo! then know, Sir, I am your rival there.

Rattle. Rival, Sir! and do you think to ſupplant me, Sir?

Wiſem. I think to maintain my ground, Sir.

Mer. And is this the folly you are come to town to publiſh? For a philoſopher to go a widow-hunting is a folly with a vengeance.

Wiſem. [*Aſide*] Am I become a jeſt? I deſerve it. Why did I come hither, but to be laughed at by all the world! my friends will deride me out of love, my enemies out of revenge! wiſe men from their ſcorn, and fools from their triumph to ſee me become as great a fool as themſelves. [*To them.*] I ſee, by your mirth, gentlemen, my company grows tedious, ſo I'm your humble ſervant.

SCENE IV.

MERITAL, MALVIL, RATTLE.

Mer. Nay, dear Ned.

Rattle. What queer bundle of ruſticity is that?

Mer. A man of admirable ſenſe, I aſſure you. Your hopes in the widow now are not worth much.

Rattle. Pugh! there's a rival, indeed! beſides, I am ſenſible that I am the happy he whom ſhe has choſen out of our whole ſex. She is ſtark mad in love, poor ſoul! and let me alone when I have made an impreſſion. I tell ye, Sirs, I have had opportunities, I have had encouragements, I have had kiſſes and embraces, lads; but mum. Now, if you tell one word, devil take me, if ever I truſt you with a ſecret again.

Malv. You will pardon me, Harry; but if I believe one word of it, may I never know a ſecret again.

Rattle. I am glad of that; my joy makes me blab, but it may be for the lady's honour not to have it believ'd.

Malv. Ay, faith, and for the honour of her ſenſe too.

Rattle. I pumped Sir Apiſh, as you deſired; it ſeems, all matters are agreed on with the old folks, he has nothing now but to get his miſtreſs's own conſent.

Malv. That's only a form; miſs ſays yes now after her father, as readily as after the parſon.

Rattle. Well, well, I thank fate my miſtreſs is at her own diſpoſal.

Mer. And you did not tell Sir Apiſh I was his rival? you can keep a ſecret?

Rattle. O inviolably to ſerve a friend, and provided there be an intrigue in the caſe. I love intrigues ſo well, I almoſt think myſelf the ſon of one.

Malv. And to publiſh them ſo well, that had you been ſo and known it, your ſuppoſed father wou'd have known his bleſſing, and the world his title.

Rattle. But why ſhou'd you think I can't keep a ſecret? Now, upon my honour, I never publiſh any one's intrigues but my own.

Malv. And your character is ſo public, that you hurt no-body's name but your own.

Rattle. Nay, curſe take me, if I am aſhamed of being publicly known to have an affair with a lady, at all.

Malv. No? but you ſhould be aſhamed of boaſting of affairs with ladies, whom it is known you never ſpoke to.

Mer. There you are too hard on him, for Rattle has affairs.

Rattle. And with women of rank.

Malv. Of very high rank, if their quality be as high as their lodgings are.

Rattle. Pry'thee, Malvil, leave this ſatirical ill-natur'd way, or, upon my word, we pretty fellows ſhall not care to be ſeen in your company.

Mer. You muſt excuſe him, he is only envious of your ſucceſs: and as the ſmiles of a miſtreſs raiſe your gayety, ſo the frowns of a miſtreſs cauſe his ſpleen.

Rattle. Do they? But you and I, Tom, know better; for, curſe me, if it be in the power of the frowns of the whole ſex to give me an uneaſy moment. Neither do I value their ſmiles at a pinch of ſnuff. And yet, I believe, I have as few of the firſt, and as many of the laſt, as——

Mer. How! how! not value the widow's ſmiles?

Rattle. Humph! they are golden ones.

Malv. Here's a rogue would perſuade us he is in love, and all the charms he can find in his miſtreſs are in her pocket.

Rattle. Agad, and that opinion is not ſingular.

I have known a fine gentleman marry a rich heireſs, with a vaſt deal of paſſion, and bury her at the month's end with a perfect reſignation.

Malv. Then his reſignation ſeems to be much more apparent than his paſſion.

Rattle. You fix his paſſion on the wrong object; it was her fortune he was ſo violently enamoured with, and had that been demanded of him, agad, he wou'd have had no more reſignation than a lawyer to refund his fee.

Mer. I am of Rattle's opinion; for if this was not the general notion, how wou'd ſome celebrated toaſts maintain their Eclat, who, conſidered out of the light of their fortune, have no more charms than beau Grin out of his embroidery.

Rattle. Or my lady Wrinkle out of her paint.

Mer. And again, others be neglected who have every charm but wealth. In ſhort, beauty is now conſidered as a qualification only for a miſtreſs, and fortune for a wife.

Malv. The ladies are pretty even with us, for they have learnt to value good qualities only in a gallant, and to look for nothing but an eſtate in a huſband.

Rattle. Theſe are rare ſentiments in a platonick lover.

Mer. Well put. How can a man love, who has ſo ill an opinion of the ſex?

Malv. Merital, you are always touching the wounds of your friends, which are too tender to endure it.

Mer. Well, gentlemen, are you for the Mall this morning?

Rattle. With all my heart.

Malv. I have buſineſs, but will meet you there.

Rattle. Gad, that's well thought on, I muſt call on ſome ladies, but they lie in our way.

Malv. Ay, your ladies commonly lie in every body's way.

Mer. You will find me in the Mall, or at St James's.

SCENE V.

MERITAL, *Lord* FORMAL.

Mer. Ha! here's a fool coming, and he is unavoidable. My lord, your humble ſervant; to ſee you at this end of the town is a miracle, at ſo early an hour.

L. Form. Why, poſitively, Mr Merital, this is an hour wherein I ſeldom make any excurſions farther than my drawing-room. But, being a day of buſineſs, I have rid down two brace of chairmen this morning. I have been, Sir, at three milliners, two perfumers, my bookſeller's, and a fan ſhop.

Mer. Ha, ha, ha! a very tireſome circuit.

L. Form. It has exagitated my complexion to that exorbitancy of Vermeile, that I ſhall hardly reduce it to any tolerable conſiſtency under a fortnight's courſe of acids.

Mer. I think, my lord, it is hardly worth while to be concerned about natural colours, now we are arrived at ſuch a perfection in artificial.

L. Form. Pardon me. We have, indeed, made ſome progreſs in red, but for your pale colours, they muſt be acquired naturally; your white waſhes will not ſubdue cherry cheeks.

Mer. O, if that be the malady, I would preſcribe to the gentlemen a courſe of rakery, and to the ladies a courſe of vapours.

L. Form. Well, poſitively, going into a bookſeller's ſhop is to me the laſt of fatigues, and yet it is a neceſſary one: for ſince the ladies have divided their time between cards and reading, a man, to be agreeable to them, muſt underſtand ſomething of books, as well as quadrille.

Mer. I am afraid, if this humour continue, it will be as neceſſary in the education of a pretty gentleman to learn to read, as to learn to dance.

L. Form. Why, I'll tell you how I do. By going to a bookſeller's ſhop once a month, I know the titles and authors of all the new books: ſo when I name one in company, it is, you know, of conſequence, ſuppoſed I have read it; immediately ſome lady pronounces ſentence, either favourable or not, according as the fame of the author and her ladyſhip's cards run high or low---then good manners enrols me in her opinion.

Mer. A very equitable court of juſtice truly.

L. Form. Reading, Sir, is the worſt thing in the world for the eyes; I once gave into it, and had in a very few months almoſt gone through a dozen pages of Caſſandra. But I found it vaſtly impaired the luſtre of my eyes. I had, Sir, in that ſhort time, perfectly loſt the direct ogle—But I loſe time— for I'm going to make a viſit juſt by——a I preſume, you hear that I intend ſhortly to quarter my coat of arms.

Mer. The world, my lord, is rather amazed how my lord Formal has ſo long withſtood ſuch temptations.

L. Form. Why truly I have had as many temptations as any man. But I have ever laid it down as a maxim, that a wife ſhou'd be very rich. Men who do not know the world will talk of virtue and beauty. Now, in my opinion, virtue is ſo ſcarce, it is not worth the looking after; and beauty ſo common, it is not worth the keeping.

Mer. Do you think a fine woman ſo trifling a poſſeſſion, my lord?

L. Form. Why, a fine woman is a very fine thing, and ſo is a fine houſe, I mean, to entertain your friends with: for they commonly enjoy both, with the additional pleaſure of novelty, whilſt they pall on your own taſte.

Mer. This from you, my lord, is ſurpriſing. Sure, you will allow ſome women to be virtuous.

L. Form. O yes. I will allow an ugly woman to be as virtuous as ſhe pleaſes, juſt as I will a poor man to be covetous. But beauty, in the hands of a virtuous woman, like gold in thoſe of a miſer, prevents the circulation of trade.

Mer. It is rather like riches in the poſſeſſion of the prudent. A virtuous woman beſtows her favours on the deſerving, and makes them a real bleſſing to the man who enjoys her; whilſt the vicious one, like a ſquandring prodigal, ſcatters them away; and, like a prodigal, is often moſt deſpiſed by thoſe to whom ſhe has been moſt kind.

L. Form. This from the gay Mr Merital is really very ſurpriſing.

Mer. Yes, my lord, the gay Mr Merital now ſtands candidate for a huſband. So you cannot wonder that I wou'd perſuade the ladies of my good principles, which may engage ſome or other to chuſe me.

L. Form. It will as ſoon engage a country borough to chuſe you parliament-man. But I muſt take an abrupt leave. For the ſweetneſs of your converſation has perfumed my ſenſes to the forgetfulneſs of an affair, which being of conſequential eſſence, obliges me to aſſure you that I am your humble ſervant.

SCENE VI.

MERITAL *alone.*

Prince of coxcombs! s'death! 'tis in the mouths of ſuch fellows as theſe, that the reputation of women ſuffer: for women are like books. Malice and envy will eaſily lead you to the detection of their faults; but their beauties good judgment only can diſcover, and good nature reliſh. And woman, that noble volume of our greateſt happineſs,

Which to the wiſe affords a rich repaſt,
Fools only cenſure, from their want of taſte.

ACT II. SCENE I.

SCENE, *Lady* MATCHLESS's *Houſe.*

Lady MATCHLESS, VERMILIA.

Lady MATCHLESS.

UPON my word, Vermilia, you wrong me, if you think noiſe, equipage, or flattery, give me any real pleaſure: it is, indeed, a pleaſing triumph for a priſoner eloped, to reflect on her paſt confinement,

ment, and preſent freedom; freed from that torment, an injurious huſband: one who——but he is gone, and, I hope, to heaven.

Verm. That's a generous wiſh, my dear; and yet I believe it is the wiſh of many whoſe huſbands deſerve a worſe place.

La. Match. You mean, during the life of a bad huſband; but thoſe prayers, then, flow more from ſelf-intereſt than generoſity; for who wou'd not wiſh her ſpouſe in heaven, when it was the only way to deliver herſelf out of a hell?

Verm. True, indeed. But yours are the efforts of pure good-nature, you pray for the happineſs of your tyrant now you are delivered out of his power.

La. Match. Ah! poor man! ſince I can ſay nothing to his advantage, let him ſleep in peace; my revenge ſhall not be on his memory, but his ſex: that part of it which I know wou'd follow his example, were they but in his place,

Verm. You have opportunities enough of revenge, and objects enough to execute it upon; for, I think, you have as many ſlaves in your aſſemblies, as the French king in his galleys.

La. Match. Why, really, I ſometimes look on my drawing room as a little parliament of fools, to which every different body ſends its repreſentatives. Beaus of all ſorts. The courtly lord, who addreſſes me with a formal, well-bred diſſimulation. The airy Sir Plume, who always walks in the minuet-ſtep, and converſes in recitativo.

Verm. And is a Narciſſus in every thing but beauty.

La. Match. Then the robuſt warrior, who proceeds by way of ſtorm or ſiege. The lawyer, who attacks me, as he would a jury, with a cringe, and a lie at the tip of his tongue. The cit, who would cheat me by way of bargain and ſale. And—your ſettling country eſquire, who wou'd put my life into half his eſtate, provided I wou'd put his whole family's into all mine.

Verm. There is a more dangerous, though a more ridiculous fool than any of theſe, and that is a fine gentleman, who becomes the diſguiſe of a lover worſe than any you have named.

La. Match. O, ay; a man of ſenſe acts a lover, juſt as a Dutchman wou'd a harlequin. He ſtumbles at every ſtraw we throw in his way, which a fop wou'd ſkip over with eaſe.

Verm. But, pray, my dear, what deſign have you in view from all theſe lovers?

La. Match. The very deſign Nature had when ſhe formed them, to make fools of them.

Verm. But you will not be ſurpriſed, if I admire that you give the leaſt encouragement to the fineſt gentlemen.

La Match. Indeed, I approve your remark. Why, it proceeds from this reaſon; that of love, like other fevers, is only dangerous to a rich conſtitution, and therefore I am cautious of giving a diſtemper which I do not intend to cure——for I have no abſolute intention ever to marry again.

Verm. Nor abſolute reſolution againſt it, I dare ſwear.

La. Match. To ſay the truth, I cannot poſitively affirm I have: nor, if I had, am I confident I ſhou'd be able to keep it. For when Sir William died, I made a ſecret reſolution never to run a ſecond hazard: but—a—at the year's end, I don't know how—a—I had like to have fallen into the ſnare again.

Verm. Well, and by what lucky chance delivered?

La. Match. The very night before our intended marriage, I flew away to London, and left my poor diſappointed ſwain to vent his paſſion to the wind.

Verm. O what a profuſion was there of ſighs, vows, prayers, oaths, tears, and curſes!——And ſo you are fled to London as a place of ſecurity againſt love-debts? I know not why it is, but certainly a woman is the leaſt liable to play the fool here: perhaps the hurry of diverſions and company keep the mind in too perpetual a motion to let it fix on one object. Whereas, in the country our ideas are more fixed and more romantic. Courts and cities have few heroes or heroines in love.

La. Match. Ah! Vermilia, let the jealous huſband learn from me; there is more danger in woods and purling ſtreams, than in an aſſembly or a play-houſe. When a beauteous grove is your theatre, a murmuring caſcade your muſic, nature's flowery landſcapes your ſcene, heaven only the ſpectator, and a pretty fellow the actor——the Lord knows what the play will be.

Verm. But I hope this five months abſence has reſtored you to a perfect ſtatu quo.

La. Match. Had he purſued his conqueſt then, I am afraid I ſhou'd have fallen before him; but he has given reſolution time to rally, and I am now ſo fortified againſt him, that all his attacks wou'd prove in vain.

Verm. Be not too confident, for I have heard military men ſay, that a garriſon, to be ſecure, ſhou'd have its works well mann'd as well as ſtrong.

SCENE II.

To them CATCHIT.

Catch. Madam, your ladyſhip's coach is at the door.

La. Match. Come, my dear, by this, I believe, the Park begins to fill.

Verm. I am ready to wait on you, my dear. Catchit, if Mr Malvil comes, you may tell him where I'm gone.

Catch. Yes, Madam.

SCENE III.

CATCHIT *alone.*

Well, ſure nature has not a more ridiculous creature than a jealous lover. Never did a lady in my profeſſion get more by forging ſmiles and favourable expreſſions from a miſtreſs, than I, by making Mr Malvil believe mine values him leſs than ſhe does. He has promiſed me a diamond ring to diſcover his rival. Ay, but how ſhall I diſcover his rival, when he has none? Hum! ſuppoſe I make him one! Ay, but that may make miſchief; well, but that muſt make for me. Well then. But who ſhall this rival be? Ha! Mr Merital is a favourite of my lady, and is often here. There is an appointment too between him and Helena to meet here at five——my lady will be at home too. Now, if I cou'd but perſuade Malvil that that aſſignation was meant with him!

[*Stands conſidering.*

S C E N E IV.

MALVIL, CATCHIT.

Malv. Your ſervant, pretty Mrs Catchit. What is that pretty head of yours meditating on?

Catch. Whatever it be, Sir, it is for your ſervice; you will be the death of me, you will. I am always contriving, and plotting, and ſtudying, and lying, and ſwearing, for you.

Mel. And you ſhall ſee no end of my gratitude.

Catch. Nor no beginning either, I am afraid; you are in my debt at leaſt five hundred pound, at the rate of a guinea a perjury: if I had carried them to Weſtminſter-hall I had made a better bargain.

Mal. Let me enjoy that dear cold miſtreſs of thine, and thou ſhalt be paid.

Catch. I fear that's an uncertain condition.

Malv. Ha! what ſay you?

Catch. Why, Sir, I ſay that——I ſay, Sir, that you have the pretti̇eſt ring on your finger there.

Malv. 'Sdeath! do not torture me.

Catch. It ſparkles ſo ſweetly.

Malv. Come, you have diſcovered ſomething. I have a rival then. Vermilia is a jilt.

Catch. Yes, marry, have you.

Mal. Be quick, dear tormenter.

Catch. Well, it is the pretti̇eſt ring I ever ſaw.

Malv. Here, take it, take any thing, tell me but all thou knoweſt.

Catch. O your ſervant, Sir; well, you are a charming man, and one can deny you nothing. I have made ſuch a diſcovery.

Malv. O dear, dear rogue!

Catch. This very morning, has my lady been praiſing a certain gentleman with ſuch raptures; running him over from head to foot with ſo much admiration and fondneſs! then every now and then, Catchit, (ſays ſhe) don't you think him an angel? Hum! a very dark one (ſays I.) Did you ever ſee ſuch eyes, ſuch teeth, ſuch a mouth? (ſays ſhe.) In my opinion, they are all very poor, (ſays I.) Then ſuch a ſhape! ſuch an air! (ſays ſhe.) Why, ay, the man wou'd do for a dancing-maſter, (ſays I.) Lud! Madam, (ſays I) wou'd you wou'd think of poor Mr Malvil. (And, to be ſure, the tears ſtood in my eyes when I ſaid it.) O no (ſays ſhe) I will think of none but Merital. Then (ſays I)——

Malv. Torments and furies! Merital!

Catch. My miſtreſs doats on him, and has appointed to meet him.

Malv. How? where? when?

Catch. Here, at five.

Malv. 'Sdeath! 'tis impoſſible.

Catch. It may be impoſſible, perhaps; but it is true.

Malv. Merital a villain! Vermilia a jilt! then the whole world's an illuſion.

[*Walks and ſpeaks diſorderly.*

Dy'e hear; do not diſcloſe a word of this to any one.

Catch. You may depend on me, Sir.

Malv. But where's Vermilia?

Catch. Gone to the Park with lady Matchleſs.

Malv. Be ſecret, and be diligent, and you ſhall not repent your pains.

Catch. Not whilſt you have jealouſy in your head, and money in your pocket, Signior. Well, how this affair will end I know not: but, I am ſure the beginning has been good. [*Kiſſes the ring.*

SCENE V.

SCENE, *Sir* POSITIVE TRAP'*s* *Houſe.*

Lady TRAP, HELENA.

Hel. To be ſold! to be put up at action! to be diſpoſed of, as a piece of goods, by way of bargain and ſale!

La. Trap. Niece, niece, you are dealt with, as a piece of rich goods; you are to be diſpoſed of at a high price; Sir Poſitive underſtands the world, and will make good conditions for you. You will have a young gentleman, and a pretty gentleman.

Hel. Yes; if a good eſtate can make a pretty gentleman.

La. Trap. Sooner than a pretty gentleman can make a good eſtate. The pretty gentlemen of our age know better how to ſpend than to get one.

Hel. Well, well, Madam, my own fortune is ſufficient to make the man I love happy. And he ſhall be one whoſe merit is his only riches, not whoſe riches are his only merit.

La. Trap. The man you love! O impudence! I wou'd be aſhamed, was I a young woman, to be even thought to have an indecent paſſion for a particular young fellow.

Hel. I would indeed be aſhamed, was I an old woman, to be known to have an indecent paſſion for all fellows in general.

La. Trap. Audacious! dare you reflect on me! on me for fellows! who am notorious for my abhorrence of that beaſtly ſex. The young women of our age, really, are enough to put one out of countenance.

Hel. Youth, Madam, always will put age out of countenance in beauty, as age will youth in wiſdom: therefore, pray, aunt, don't you pretend to the one, and I'll reſign all pretenſions to the other.

La. Trap. Do you think you have ſo much beauty then, miſs?

Hel. I think I have enough to do ſo ſmall an execution; and, I am ſure, I have enough to pleaſe myſelf, and him I deſire to pleaſe; let the reſt of the world think what they will, 'tis not worth my care; I have no ambition to be toaſted in every company of men, and roaſted in every aſſembly of women: for the envy of the women, is a neceſſary conſequence of the admiration of the men.

S C E N E VI.

To them, Sir POSITIVE TRAP.

Sir. Poſ. What lie are you telling? ha!

La. Trap. Juſtify me, deary, juſtify me; your niece ſays I have an indecent paſſion for your whole ſex.

Sir Poſ. That I will, by the family of the Traps. So far from that, huſſy, ſhe hates our whole ſex; ſhe has hardly a decent paſſion for her own huſband, becauſe he's a man.

Hel. You have hit the nail on the head, my dear uncle.

Sir Poſ. Huſſy, huſſy, you are a diſgrace to the family of the Traps. I can hardly believe Sir Nicodemus Trap to have been your grandfather, Sir Gregory your father, and Sir Poſitive your uncle.

Hel. Surfeiting genealogy! ha, ha, ha.

Sir Poſ. Do you ridicule your anceſtors, the illuſtrious race of Traps?

Hel. No, Sir, I honour them ſo far, that I am reſolved not to take a fool into the family.

Sir Poſ. Do you mean Sir Apiſh, minx? Do you call a baronet a fool, and one of ſo ancient a houſe? Huſſy, the Simples and the Traps are the two ancienteſt houſes in England. Don't provoke me, don't provoke me, I ſay; I'll ſend for Sir Apiſh immediately: you ſhall be wedded, bedded, and executed, in half an hour.

Hel. Indeed! executed? O barbarous!

Sir Poſ. Theſe girls love plain-dealing. She wants it *in puris naturalibus*. [*Half aſide.*

La. Trap. Had you heard her juſt now, you wou'd have thought her ripe for any thing; I proteſt ſhe made me bluſh.

Sir Poſ. O monſtrous! make my lady wife bluſh!

Hel. She who did that, I am ſure, was ripe for any thing.

Sir Poſ. Huſſy, you are no Trap; you have nothing of the Traps in you. The midwife put a cheat on Sir Gregory.

La. Trap. I have wondered how a creature of ſuch principles cou'd ſpring up in a family ſo noted for the purity of its women.

Sir Poſ. She ſhall change her name to-morrow; prepare to receive Sir Apiſh, for this is the laſt day of your virginity.

Hel. Do you look on my conſent as unneceſſary then? for he has never made any addreſſes to me.

Sir Poſ. Addreſſes to you! Why, I never ſaw my lady there till an hour before our marriage. I made my addreſſes to her father, her father to his lawyer, the lawyer to my eſtate, which being found a Smithfield equivalent—the bargain was ſtruck. Addreſſing, quotha! What need have young people of addreſſing, or any thing, till they come to undreſſing?

La. Trap. Ay, this courtſhip is an abominable diabolical practice, and the parent of nothing but lies and flattery. The firſt who uſed it was the Serpent who beguiled Eve.

Sir Poſ. Oons! and it hath beguiled above half the women ſince. I hope to ſee the time, when a man may carry his daughter to market with the ſame lawful authority, as any other of his cattle. But for you, Madam, to morrow's your wedding day. I have ſaid it, and I am poſitive.

Hel. Yes. But know, uncle of mine, that I am a woman, and may be as poſitive as you; and ſo, your ſervant.

La. Trap. After her, honey; don't leave her to herſelf in this rage.

Sir Poſ. I'll bring her to herſelf, by the right-hand of the Traps.

SCENE VII.

Lady TRAP *alone.*

If Helena be Sir Simple's to-morrow, I have but this day for my deſign on Merital. Some way he muſt know my love: but ſhou'd he reject it and betray me! why, if he does, 'tis but denying it bravely, and my reſerv'd behaviour has raiſed me ſuch a reputation of virtue, that he wou'd not be believed. Yet how to let him know! ſhou'd I write! that were too ſure a teſtimony againſt me; and yet that's the only way. My niece goes to lady Matchleſs's this evening. I'll make him an aſſignation, in her name, to meet by dark, in the dining-room. But how to make it in her name: [*Pauſes.* Ha! I have thought of a way, and will about it inſtantly.

SCENE VIII.

HELENA, *and Sir* POSITIVE TRAP.

Hel. Don't teaze me ſo, dear uncle. I can never like a fool, I abhor a fop.

Sir Poſ. But there are three thouſand pounds a-year, and a title. Do you abhor thoſe, huſſy?

Hel. His eſtate I don't want, and his title I deſpiſe.

Sir Poſ. Very fine! very fine! deſpiſe a title! huſſy, you are no Trap; Oons! I believe you are no woman either. What, wou'd you take a ſcandalous, ſneaking Miſter, one who can't make you a lady?

Hel. Since nothing elſe will do, I am engaged by all the ſtrength of vows and honour.

Sir Poſ. Engaged! why was not the widow Jilt engaged to Mr Goodland, and left him immediately on the arrival of Sir Harry Rich, whom ſhe left again for my Lord Richmore? Never tell me of engagements, contracts, and I don't know what. Mere bugbears to frighten children with: all women of ſenſe laugh at them. You are no more obliged to ſtand to your word when you have promiſed a man, than when you have refuſed him. The law diſſolves all contracts without a valuable conſideration; or, if it did not, a valuable conſideration would diſſolve the law.

Hel. Perhaps, Sir, I'll never marry at all.

Sir Poſ. Huſſy, huſſy, you have a ſanguine conſtitution. You will either marry, or do worſe.

Hel. In my opinion, I can't do worſe, than to marry a fool.

Sir Poſ. A very fine notion, indeed!——I muſt ſell her ſoon, or ſhe will go off but as a piece of ſecond-hand goods. [*Aſide.*

SCENE IX.

To them, Lady TRAP *with a letter.*

La. Trap. O my dear, ſee what good luck has preſented us with. A letter from your niece to Merital.

Sir Positive *reads.*

"Dear Sir,
"This afternoon my uncle will be abroad, to-
"morrow I am intended for Sir Apiſh. I need ſay
"no more than at ſix this evening, you will find in
"the dining-room, yours,
"Helena."

"*P. S.* I ſhall be alone and in the dark; aſk
"no queſtions, but come up directly."

But, deary, this is not her hand.

La. Trap. Do you think, child, ſhe would not diſguiſe it as much as poſſible?

Sir Poſ. I ſmell it. I ſee it. I read it. 'Tis her hand with a witneſs. See here, thou vile daughter of Sir Gregory. An aſſignation to a man.

Hel. Inſupportable! to confront me with a forgery!

Sir Poſ. Your own forgery, huſſy.

La. Trap. But really, it does not look very like her hand.

Sir Poſ. Let me ſee, hum! 'tis not exactly, very, very like. Methinks 'tis not like at all. [*Looking through ſpectacles.*

La. Trap. This may be ſome counterfeit. I wou'd engage my honour ſhe is innocent. Copy it over before your uncle, my dear, that will be a conviction.

Sir Poſ. Copy it over before Sir Poſitive, huſſy.

Hel. Bring pen, ink, and paper there. You ſhall not have the leaſt pretence to accuſe me.

Sir Poſ. I would not have thee guilty for the world. I would not have ſuch a diſgrace fall on our noble and ancient family. It might render us ridiculous to every upſtart.

[*Here a ſervant brings pen,* &c. Helena *writes.*

La. Trap. O horrible! write to a man! had I held a pen, at her age, with that deſign, my hand wou'd have ſhook ſo, that I ſhould have ſpilt my ink, with the bare apprehenſion.

Hel. Now, Sir, be convinced, and juſtify me.

[*Giving the letter with the copy to Sir* Poſ.

Sir Poſ. There is, indeed, no reſemblance.

La. Trap. Are you blind? they are both alike to a tittle. [*Taking them.*

Sir Poſ. To a dot. Her hand to a dot. I'll ſend for Sir Apiſh immediately. I ſmell it, a rank plot! I ſmell it.

Hel. You have out-faced me bravely before Sir Poſitive. You may not, perhaps, do ſo before an impartial judge.

SCENE X.

Lady TRAP *alone.*

It is ſtrange that women ſhou'd contend for wit in a huſband, when they may enjoy ſuch an advantage from having a fool.

SCENE XI. *St James's Park.*

Lady MATCHLESS, VERMILIA, MERITAL, RATTLE.

Mer. Indeed, Vermilia, it is very barbarous in you to torment poor Malvil ſo. Don't you think, if you ſhou'd drive him to any deſperate extremity, you wou'd have a great deal to anſwer for? And I aſſure you, by words he has lately dropt, I fear he has ſome ſuch deſign.

Rattle. Don't you imagine, widow, that an humble ſervant of yours is in as much danger?

La. Match. If he be ſo, I wiſh him a ſafe deliverance.

Ver. Wou'd he have me believe him mad enough to run his neck into one nooſe, becauſe I am not mad enough to run mine into a worſe. No, no. You all uſe thoſe words, ropes, daggers, ſwords and piſtols, only as embelliſhments of ſpeech: or, if you have any deſign by them, it is to frighten us, not injure yourſelves.

La. Match. But I am reſolved not to be alarmed with threats. Let me ſee a gallant fairly ſwinging— And then—I'll ſay, poor Strephon, alas! he did love.

Mer. You might juſtly ſay he had more love than reaſon.

Ver. Why do you attempt then to perſuade us into ſo deſpicable an opinion of your reaſon?

Mer. Malvil ſays, that's the ſureſt way to your love: and that the lower we are in your opinion of our ſenſe, the higher we are in your favour. He compares thoſe to two ſcales, of which as the one riſes the other falls.

La. Match. And, upon my word, he is in the right: for who expects wit in a lover, any more than good muſic in an Engliſh opera, or common ſenſe in an Italian one!—They are all three abſolute farces— Not but I wou'd have the creature be a little rational, and able to divert one in the ſullenneſs of a monkey or a paroquet; ſo as to ſing half a favourite ſong, or read a new play, or fill up a party at quadrille.

Mer. As a chair does at a country dance, or a country juſtice a chair at a quarter-ſeſſions.

La. Match. Right. A lover, when he is admitted to cards, ought to be ſolemnly ſilent, and obſerve the motions of his miſtreſs. He muſt laugh when ſhe laughs, ſigh when ſhe ſighs. In ſhort, he ſhou'd be the ſhadow of her mind. A lady, in the preſence of her lover, ſhou'd never want a looking-glaſs, as a beau, in the preſence of his looking-glaſs, never wants a miſtreſs.

Mer. Since a lover is ſuch a ridiculous thing, Madam, e'en turn one into a huſband.

La. Match. Ah! the very name throws me into the vapours——

Rattle. It is a receipt, which has cured many a vapoured lady of my acquaintance.

Mer. But, lady Matchleſs, what wou'd you ſay to a lover who ſhou'd addreſs himſelf to your reaſon, and try to convince you of the principal end in the formation of women, and the benefits of matrimony; from the lights of nature and religion, diſcloſe to you the ſyſtem of platonic love, and draw his pretenſions from his wiſdom, and his arguments from his philoſophy.

La. Match. If he had more philoſophy than love, I ſhould adviſe him to ſeek his cure from that. But if he had more love than philoſophy—Mercy upon him!

Mer. Then you have juſt ſuch a lover arrived.

La. Match. Bleſs us! 'tis not Seneca's ghoſt, I hope.

Mer. No, 'tis the ghoſt of a departed beau, in the habit of a country ſquire, with the ſentiments of an Anthenian philoſopher, and the paſſion of an Arcadian ſwain.

La. Match. This muſt be Wiſemore. [*Aſide.*

Ver. A motley piece indeed. I fancy, my dear, there is as ridiculous a variety in this one, as in all the reſt of your admirers.

Rattle. Variety enough: for by his dreſs you wou'd imagine he came from North Friezland, and his manners ſeem piping hot from the Cape of Good-Hope.

La. Match. Fie! you rally.

Mer. Why, poſitively, the poor man is an apter object of pity than of raillery, and wou'd better become an elegy than a lampoon. He look'd as melancholy, as ill-natur'd, and as abſurd, as I've ſeen a young poet who cou'd not out-live the third night.

Rattle. ——Or an old bridegroom who has outliv'd the third night.

Ver. Dear Matchleſs, let us turn; for I ſee one coming whom I wou'd avoid.

Mer. You won't be ſo cruel! I'll diſcover you.

Ver. Do: and I will revenge myſelf on you to Helena.

SCENE XII.

MALVIL, MERITAL.

Malv. Who are thoſe fine ladies you parted from?

Mer. Some of Rattle's acquaintance.

Malv. Was not Vermilia there?

Mer. She was.

Malv. Do you act friendly, Merital?

Mer. Ay, faith! and very friendly; for I have been pleading your cauſe with the ſame earneſtneſs as if I had been your counſel in the affair. I have been a ſort of proxy to you.

Malv. Confuſion! [*Aſide.*

Mer Why, thou art jealous, I believe. Come, do we dine together?

Malv. I am engaged, but will meet at five.

Mer. Nay, then I am engaged, and to meet a miſtreſs.

Malv. A miſtreſs at five!

Mer. Ay, Sir, and ſuch a miſtreſs—But I ſee ſomething has put you out of humour; ſo I will not expatiate on my happineſs: for I know lovers are, of all creatures, the moſt ſubject to envy. So, Servant.

SCENE XIII.

MALVIL *alone.*

Mal. And thou ſhalt find they are ſubject to rage too. Do you laugh at your ſucceſsful villainy! Yet his open carriage wou'd perſuade me he has no ill deſign. This morning too he told me of another miſtreſs. But that may be falſe, and only intended to blind my ſuſpicions. It muſt be ſo. Vermilia's fond expreſſions, her appointment, his denying her. O they are glaring proofs! and I am now convinced. Yet all theſe appearances may be deluſions. Well, I

will

will once more ſee her. If I find her innocent, I am happy; if not, the knowing her guilt may cure my love. But anxiety is the greateſt of torments.

In doubt, as in the dark, things ſad appear,
More diſmal and more horrid than they are.

ACT III. SCENE I.

SCENE, *Lady* MATCHLESS's *Houſe.*

MALVIL, VERMILIA.

MALVIL.

HOW have I deſerved this uſage, Madam? By what behaviour of mine have I provoked you to make me that deſpicable thing the dangler after a woman who is carrying on an affair with another man?

Verm. An affair, Sir!

Malv. You know too well the juſtice of my accuſation, nor am I a ſtranger to your ſoft languiſhing fondneſs, your wanton praiſes of my rival, of Merital, your walking in the Park, your appointment with him.

Verm. O jealouſy, thou child and bane of love! raſh, dreaming mad-man, cou'd you awake from your errors, and ſee how groſsly you abuſe me, if you had the leaſt ſpark of humanity left, it wou'd raiſe a flame of horror in your ſoul.

Malv. O, it were worſe than ten thouſand deaths to find I have wrong'd you, and I wou'd undergo them all to prove you innocent.

Verm. To think you innocent, I muſt think you mad. Invention cannot counterfeit any other excuſe.

Malv. A reflection on your own conduct, Madam, will juſtify every part of mine, but my love.

Ver. Name not that noble paſſion. A ſavage is as capable of it as thou art. And do you tax me with my love to Merital? He has as many virtues as thou haſt blemiſhes. The proudeſt of our ſex might glory in his addreſſes, the meaneſt might be aſhamed of thine. Go curſe thy fate, and nature, which has made thee an object of our ſcorn: but thank thy jealouſy, which has diſcovered to thee that thou art the deriſion of a ſucceſsful rival, and my averſion.

SCENE II.

MALVIL, CATCHIT. [Malvil *ſtands as in amaze.*]

Catch. O gemini! Sir, what's the matter? I met my miſtreſs in the greateſt rage.

Malv. You know enough not to have aſked that. Here, take this letter, and when Merital comes to his appointment, you will find an opportunity to deliver it him. Be ſure to do it before he ſees your miſtreſs: for I have contrived a ſcheme in it that will ruin him for ever with her.——You will deliver it carefully?

Catch. Yes indeed, Sir.

Malv. And learn what you can, and come to my lodgings to-morrow morning——Take this kiſs, as an earneſt of what I'll do for you.

SCENE III.

CATCHIT *alone.*

Catch. Methinks I long to know what this ſcheme is; I muſt know, and I will know. 'Tis but wafer-ſealed. I'll open it and read it. But here are the ladies.

SCENE IV.

Lady MATCHLESS, VERMILIA.

La. Match. Ha, ha, ha! and ſo the creature has taken a fit of jealouſy into his head, and has been raving moſt tragically! Don't look ſo dull, dear; what, becauſe he gives himſelf airs, will you give yourſelf the vapours?

Verm. I am concerned only that I ſhould ever have favoured him in my opinion.

La. Match. Indeed, you have no cauſe: for you have revenge in your own hand, ſince nothing but matrimony will cure his phrenzy.

Verm. Which cure when I afford him, may I——

La. Match. O no oaths, no imprecations. But, if any, let it be this. When next you are inclined to forgive him, may he be ſo ſtubborn not to aſk it; that, I am ſure, is curſe enough.

Verm. Nay, but, dear Matchleſs, do not rally me on that ſubject.

La. Match. Is there any ſubject fitter for raillery? the wiſe, you know, have always made a jeſt of love.

Verm. Yes, and love has made a jeſt of the wiſe, who ſeem to have no other quarrel to it, but that they are the leaſt ſucceſsful in it.

La. Match. Nay, if you are an advocate for love, I ſhall think——

Verm. What?

La. Match. That you are in love.

Verm. Well, you are a cenſorious, ill-natur'd, teazing——

La. Match. Don't be out of humour, child. I tell you the fellow's your own.

S C E N E V.

To them RATTLE.

Rattle. Ladies, your humble ſervant.

La. Match. O, you are moſt opportunely come, for poor Vermilia is horridly in the vapours, and you are, we know, a ſkilful phyſician.

Rattle. But what ſignifies ſkill in the phyſician, when the patient will not take his advice?

Verm. When he miſtakes the diſeaſe, his advice is not like to be ſafe. And, I aſſure you, I never was leſs in the vapours than now.

La. Match. That's a dangerous ſymptom: for when a ſick lady thinks herſelf well, her fever muſt be very high.

Rattle. Pox take her, wou'd ſhe was dead: for ſhe's always in my way.

Verm. This is acting phyſician, indeed, to perſuade me into a diſtemper.

Rattle. I believe, Madam, you are in very little danger. But, widow, the whole town wonders you are not ſurfeited with ſo much courtſhip.

Verm. Courtſhip, Mr Rattle, is a diſh adapted to the palate of our ſex.

Rattle. But there is a ſecond courſe more agreeable, and better adapted to a lady's palate. Courtſhip is but a long, dull grace to a rich entertainment, both equally banes to ſharp-ſet appetite, and equally out of faſhion; the beau-monde ſay only *Benedicite*, and then fall on.

La. Match. No. Courtſhip is to marriage, like a fine avenue to an old falling manſion beautified with a painted front; but no ſooner is the door ſhut on us, than we diſcover an old, ſhabby, out-of-faſhion'd hall, whoſe only ornaments are a ſet of branching ſtag's horns——lamentable emblems of matrimony!

SCENE VI.

Lady MATCHLESS, *Lord* FORMAL, VERMILIA, RATTLE.

L. Form. Ladies, I am your moſt obedient, and obſequious humble ſervant. Mr Rattle, I am your devoted.

Rattle. That's an over-ſtrain'd compliment, my lord: we all know you are entirely devoted to the ladies.

La. Match. That's an over-ſtrain'd compliment to us; for we muſt be all proud of ſo elegant a devoté.

L. Form. Your ladyſhip has infuſed more pride into the ingredients of my nature by that one word, than was ever in them ſince their firſt mingling into man. And if my title, or the opinion which the world has (I will not ſay juſtly) conceived of me, can render me agreeable to the fountain of beauty, I wou'd, with pleaſure, throw off all other canals, and let the pure current of my joys flow from her alone.

La. Match. That were to draw the envy of the whole world on me: and would be as unreaſonable, as a deſire to monopolize the light of the ſun.

L. Form. As your ladyſhip ſays, I have been compared to the ſun. But the compariſon will break, if purſued: for the ſun ſhines on all alike; whereas my influence wou'd be ſtrictly confined to one centre.

Rattle. Methinks, my lord, you who profeſs good-breeding, ſhould be leſs particular before ladies.

Verm. O, we may excuſe particularity in a lover; beſides, lord Formal is ſo perfect a maſter of good-breeding, that if he launched a little out of the common road, the world wou'd eſteem it a precedent, and not an error.

La. Match. O, we ſhall never out-ſhine the court of France, till lord Formal is at the head of *les affairs de beau monde*.

L. Form. Your ladyſhip's compliments are ſuch an inundation, that they hurry the weak return of mine down their ſtream. But, really, I have been at ſome pains to inculcate principles of good breeding, and laid down ſome rules concerning diſtance, ſubmiſſion, ceremonies, laughing, ſighing, ogling, viſits, affronts, reſpect, pride, love.

Verm. Has your lordſhip publiſhed this book? It muſt be mightily read, for it promiſes much——And then the name of the author——

Rattle. [*Aſide.*] Promiſes nothing.

L. Form. Why, I am not determined to print it at all; for there are an ill-bred ſet of people called critics, whom I have no great notion of encountring.

SCENE VII.

To them, Sir POSITIVE TRAP, *Sir* APISH SIMPLE, HELENA.

Sir Poſ. Ladies, your humble ſervant; your ſervant, gentlemen.

La. Match. You are a great ſtranger, Sir Poſitive.

Sir. Poſ. Ay, couſin, you muſt not take our not viſiting you oftner amiſs, for I am full of buſineſs, and ſhe there, poor girl, is never eaſy but when ſhe is at home. The Traps are no gadding family, our women ſtay at home and do buſineſs.

Rattle. [*Aſide.*] Their huſbands buſineſs, I believe.

Sir. Poſ. They are none of your fidgeting, flirting, flanting laſſes, that ſleep all the morning, dreſs all the afternoon, and card it all night. Our daughters riſe before the ſun, and go to bed with him: the Traps are houſe-wives, couſin. We teach our daughters to make a pye inſtead of a curtſie, and that good old Engliſh art of clear-ſtarching, inſtead of that heatheniſh gambol called dancing.

L. Form. Sir, give me leave to preſume to aſk your pardon.

Sir Apiſh. Why, Sir father of mine, you will not ſpeak againſt dancing before the ladies. Clear-ſtarching, indeed! you will pardon him, Madam, Sir Poſitive is a little *a la campaigne.*

Sir Poſ. Dancing begets warmth, which is the parent of wantonneſs. It is, Sir, the great-grandfather of cuckoldom.

L. Form. O inhuman! it is the moſt glorious invention that has been conceived by the imagination of mankind, and the moſt perfect mark that diſtinguiſhes us from the brutes.

Sir Poſ. Ay, Sir, it may ſerve ſome, perhaps; but the Traps have always had reaſon to diſtinguiſh them.

L. Form. You ſeem to have miſunderſtood me, Sir; I mean the polite world from the ſavage.

La. Match. Have you ſeen the new opera, couſin Helena?

Hel. I never ſaw an opera, couſin, and, indeed, I have a great curioſity——

L. Form. May I preſume on the honour of waiting on you?

Sir. Poſ. Sir, Sir, my niece has an antipathy to muſic, it always makes her head ake.

Sir Apiſh. Ha, ha, ha! muſic make a lady's head ake!

Sir Poſ. Ay, and her huſband's heart ake too, by the right hand of the Traps.

L. Form. Pray, Sir, who are the Traps!

Sir Poſ. Why, Sir, the Traps are a venerable family. We have had, at leaſt, fifty knights of the ſhire, deputy-lieutenants, and colonels of the militia in it, Perhaps the grand Mogul has not a nobler coat of arms. It is, Sir, a lion rampant, with a wolf couchant, and a cat currant, in a field gules.

L. Form. It wants nothing but ſupporters to be very noble, truly.

Sir Poſ. Supporters, Sir! it has ſix thouſand a-year to ſupport its nobility, and ſix thouſand years to ſupport its antiquity.

L. Form. You will give me leave to preſume, Sir, with all the deference imaginable to your ſuperiority of judgment, to doubt whether it be practicable to confer the title of noble on any coat of arms that labours under the deplorable deficiency of a coronet.

Sir Poſ. How, Sir! do you detract from the nobility of my coat of arms? If you do, Sir, I muſt tell you, you labour under a deficiency of common ſenſe.

La. Match. O fie, Sir Poſitive! you are too ſevere on his Lordſhip.

Sir Poſ. He is a lord then! and what of that? an old Engliſh baronet is above a lord. A title of yeſterday! an innovation! Who were lords I wonder, in the time of Sir Julius Cæſar? And it is plain he was a baronet, by his being called by his Chriſtian name.

Verm. Chriſten'd name! I apprehend, Sir, that Cæſar lived before the time of Chriſtianity.

Sir Poſ. And what then, Madam? he might be a baronet without being a Chriſtian, I hope. But I don't ſuppoſe our antiquity will recommend us to you: for women love upſtarts, by the right hand of the Traps.

S C E N E VIII.

To them, WISEMORE.

Wiſem. Ha! grant me patience, Heaven. Madam, if five months abſence has not effaced the remembrance of what has paſſed between us, you will recollect me with bluſhing cheeks. Not to bluſh now were to forſake your ſex.

La. Match. You have forſaken your humanity, Sir, to affront me thus publicly.

Wiſem. How was I deceived by my opinion of your good ſenſe! but London would ſeduce a ſaint. A widow no ſooner comes to this vile town, than ſhe keeps open houſe for all gueſts. All, all are welcome. Your hatchments were at firſt intended to repel viſitants; but they are now hung out for the ſame hoſpitable end as the bills, "Lodgings to let;" with this difference only, that the one invites to a mercenary, the other to a free tenement.

Rattle. This behaviour, Sir, will not be ſuffered here.

Sir Apiſh. No, Sir, this behaviour, Sir, will not be ſuffered here, Sir.

L. Form. Upon my title it is not altogether conſonant to the rules of conſummate good-breeding.

La. Match. Pray, gentlemen, take no notice.

Wiſem. Madam, I may have been too rude; I hope you'll pardon me. The ſudden ſurpriſe of ſuch a ſight hurried away my ſenſes, as if I ſympathized with the objects I beheld. But I have recovered them. My reaſon cools, and I can now paint out your errors. Start not at that word, nor be offended that I do it before ſo many of your admirers; for though my colours be never ſo lively, the weak eye of their underſtanding is too dim to diſtinguiſh them. They will take them for beauties: they will adore you for them. You may have a coronet, doubtleſs. A large jointure is as good a title to a lord, as a coronet is to a fine lady.

La. Match. Ha, ha, ha! witty, I proteſt, and true; for, in my opinion, a lord is the prettieſt thing in the world.

L. Form. And your Ladyſhip may make him the happieſt thing in the world.

Wiſem. O nature, nature, why didſt thou form woman, in beauty the maſter-piece of the creation, and give her a ſoul capable of being caught with the tinſel outſide of ſuch a fop as ~~this~~! this empty, gaudy, nameleſs thing!

L. Form. Let me preſume to tell you, that nameleſs thing will be agreeable to the ladies, in ſpite of your envy.

Wiſem. Madam, by all that's heavenly, I love you more than life: wou'd I might not ſay, than wiſdom. If it be not in my power to merit a return, let me obtain this grant, that you wou'd baniſh from you theſe knaves;—theſe vultures; wolves are more merciful than they. What is their deſire, but to riot in your plenty? to ſacrifice your boundleſs ſtores to their licentious appetites? to pay their deſponding creditors with your gold? to ravage you, ruin you; nay, to make you curſe that auſpicious day which gave you birth!

L. Form. This is the rudeſt gentleman that ever offended my ears ſince they firſt enjoyed the faculty of hearing. [*Aſide.*

Verm. This is very unaccountable, methinks.

La. Match. Lord, my dear, don't you know he has been formerly a beau? and was, indeed, very well received in his time: till going down into the country, and ſhutting himſelf up into a ſtudy among a ſet of paper-philoſophers, he, who went in a butterfly, came out a book-worm. Ha, ha, ha!

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha!

Wiſem. When once a lady's raillery is ſet a running, it very ſeldom ſtops till it has exhauſted all her wit.

Rattle. Agad, I would adviſe you to wade off before the ſtream's too high; for your philoſophy will be ſure to ſink you.

Sir Poſ. Ay, ay, ſink ſure enough: for, by the right hand of the Traps, a lady's wit is ſeldom any thing but froth.

Rattle. I have ſeen it make many a wiſe eſquire froth at the mouth before now.

Verm. That muſt be a very likely ſign of a lover, indeed.

Wiſem. O very, very likely; for it is a certain ſign of a madman.

L Form. If thoſe are ſynonymous terms, I have long ſince entered into a ſtate of diſtraction.

Wiſem. If I ſtay, I ſhall be mad, indeed. Madam, farewel; may Heaven open your eyes before you are ſhut into perdition.

SCENE

SCENE IX.

Lady MATCHLESS, VERMILIA, HELENA, *Lord* FORMAL, *Sir* POSITIVE, *Sir* APISH, *and* RATTLE.

La Match. Ha, ha, ha, ruſtic! Did you ever ſee ſuch a creature?

L. Form. No, upon my title; nor am I perfectly determinate what ſpecies of animals to aſſign him to, unleſs he be one of thoſe barbarous inſects the polite call country ſquires.

Sir Poſ. Barbarous! Sir, I'd have you to know, there are not better-natur'd people alive.

Hel. [*Aſide.*] I am uneaſy at this diſappointment of Merital.—Sir, my aunt will be at home before us..

Sir Poſ. So ſhe will, chucky. Lookee, couſin, you ſee the Traps don't love gadding.

L. Form. May I preſume to lead you to your coach?

Sir Poſ. Sir, I always lead my niece myſelf; it's the cuſtom of the Traps.

L. Form. Sir, your moſt obedient and obſequious humble ſervant.

SCENE X.

Lady MATCHLESS, VERMILIA, *Lord* FORMAL, *Sir* APISH, *and* RATTLE.

L. Form. If they are all like you, the Traps are the worſt-bred family in Europe. [*Aſide.*]——I preſume that gentleman has ſome heireſs with him.

Sir Apiſh. Why, ſhe is to be my wife to-morrow morning.

La. Match. How, Sir Apiſh! this is ſurpriſing.

Sir Apiſh. Why, indeed, I do not like country education; but then I conſider that the town air will produce town breeding: for there was Lady Rig, who when firſt ſhe came to town, nothing was ever ſo aukward. But now ſhe ſwims a minuet, and ſits you eight and forty hours at quadrille.

L. Form. Her ladyſhip is indebted to my inſtructions,

tions; for 'tis well known, before I had the honour of her acquaintance, ſhe has publicly ſpoke againſt that divine collection of polite learning written by Mr Gulliver: but now, the very moment it is named, ſhe breaks out into the prettieſt exclamation, and cries, O the dear, ſweet, pretty, little creatures: Oh, gemini! wou'd I had been born a Lilliputian.

La. Match. But methinks, Sir Apiſh, a lady who has ſeen the world ſhould be more agreeeble to one of your refined taſte: beſides, I have heard you ſay you like a widow.

Sir Apiſh. Ah! l'amour! a perfect declaration! ſhe is in love with me, *mardie!* [*Aſide.*]——Ah! Madam, if I durſt declare it, there is a certain perſon in the world, who, in a certain perſon's eye, is a more agreeable perſon than any perſon, amongſt all the perſons whom perſons think agreeable perſons.

La. Match. Whoever that perſon is, ſhe certainly is a very happy perſon.

Sir Apiſh. Ah! madam, my eyes ſufficiently and evidently declare, that that perſon is no other perſon than your ladyſhip's own perſon.

La. Match. Nay, all this I have drawn on myſelf.

L. Form. Your ladyſhip's eyes are two loadſtones, that attract the admiration of our whole ſex: their virtues are more refined than the loadſtone's: for you, madam, attract the golden part.

Rattle. Come, gentlemen, are you for the opera?

L. Form. Oh! by all means. Ladies, your moſt humble ſervant.

Sir Apiſh. Your ladyſhip's everlaſting creature.

SCENE XI.

Lady MATCHLESS, VERMILIA.

Verm. And pray, my dear, what do you mean by an additional lover?

La. Match. To deliver my couſin Helena from ſo deteſtable a match. She intreated it of me; and I believe I have now done her buſineſs, and am a ſucceſsful rival.

SCENE

SCENE XII.

To them CATCHIT.

Catch. Oh, Madam, I have been waiting this half hour for an opportunity. There's a terrible ſcene of miſchief going forwards. Mr Malvil has been taxing me about Mr Merital; and ſo I let drop a few words, and ſo he has taken a fit of jealouſy, and ſo ſee the conſequence. [*Gives an open letter.*

Verm. Ha! 'tis a challenge! How came you by it?

Catch. Why, madam, he had heard that Mr Merital had an appointment here, and ſo, he deſired me to give him this letter; and ſo, and ſo——

Verm, And ſo you had the curioſity to open it.

La. Match. Since it has given us an opportunity to prevent miſchief, you muſt pardon her.

Verm. Prevent! No, I'll further it rather.

La. Match. But, my dear, conſider here is the life of the innocent as well as guilty at ſtake.

Catch. O, dear Madam, don't let poor Mr Merital ſuffer for my fault.

Verm. Your fault!

Catch. If you will pardon me, madam, I'll diſcover the whole miſtake.

La. Match. On that condition, I'll aſſure your pardon.

Catch. Why, Madam, I had heard that Mrs Helena was to be here at five, and ſo I ſent word to Mr Merital; and Mr Malvil coming in at that time (which was when your ladyſhip went to the Park this morning), I dropt a word or two about meeting a miſtreſs here; and ſo, I ſuppoſe, he thought it was your ladyſhip; and ſo, this afternoon he gave me a letter, which, I muſt own, my curioſity——

Verm. Very fine, indeed!

La. Match. I have a thought juſt riſen, which may turn this accident into a very lucky ſcene of diverſion. Miſtreſs Catchit, can you not change the name of Merital on the ſuperſcription into that of Wiſemore?

Catch. O, Madam, I am dextrous at thoſe things.

La. Match. Come in then, and I'll tell you farther. Give me your hand, Vermilia: take my word for it, child, the men are very ſilly creatures; therefore let us laugh at mankind,

And teach them, that, in ſpite of all their ſcorn,
Our ſlaves they are, and for our ſervice born.

S C E N E XIII.

SCENE, *Sir* POSITIVE TRAP'*s Houſe.*

Lady TRAP *diſcovered, and then* MERITAL.

La. Trap. Every thing is prepared; now is the happy hour. I hear ſome ſteps; 'tis ſurely he. Who's there? my love?

Mer. My life! my ſoul! my joy!

La. Trap. Soft, my aunt will hear us.

Mer. Oh, name her not. She is a perfect antidote to love. Let theſe bleſſed moments be ſpent in nothing but ſoft careſſes. Oh! let me breathe out my fond ſoul on thy lips, and let thine own inform thee what I'd ſay. It will, I know, be tender as my thoughts.

La. Trap. [*aſide.*] What fools men are to make ſuch buſtles about particular women, when they know not one from another in the dark?

Mer. But ſay, my life, what method ſhall I contrive for your eſcape? Conſider you are in the jaws of wretches, who would, for a little profit, ſee you miſerable for ever.

La. Trap. I muſt blame my ill-adviſed boldneſs, in truſting myſelf alone, even with you. I fear the frailty of my own ſex, and the ſtrength of yours.

Mer. Not infant babes can love their tender mothers with more innocence. Sure my Helena has obſerved nothing in my conduct to ground ſuch a ſuſpicion on. But let us not trifle: go with me now; do not truſt your aunt; ſhe has cunning enough to deceive a thouſand Argus's.

La. Trap. Nay, you have no reaſon to aſperſe my aunt; ſhe always ſpeaks well of you, and I hate ingratitude.

[*Here* Helena *entering with a candle, overhearing Lady* Trap, *blows it out, retires to the corner of the ſcene, and liſtens.*

Mer. 'Tis the aunt herſelf. What a noſe have I, to miſtake a bunch of hemlock for a noſegay of violets! I don't know the meaning of this; but I'll try how far ſhe will carry it; perhaps I may blind her ſuſpicions for the future. [*Aſide.* Come, come, madam, contrive ſome way for an eſcape, or I ſhall make uſe of the preſent opportunity. My paſſion muſt be cooled.

La. Trap. [*in a low voice.*] I'll call my aunt, if you dare attempt.

Mer. She is here already, madam. Ha, ha, ha, did you think I did not know a fine woman from a green girl? Cou'd not my warm, vigorous kiſſes, inform you that I knew on whom they were beſtowed? You muſt have long ſince diſcover'd my paſſion for your niece to have been a counterfeit, a covering on my flame for you. Be aſſured, madam, ſhe has nothing agreeable to me but her fortune. Wou'd you manage wiſely, you might ſecure yourſelf a gallant, and your gallant an eſtate.

La. Trap. Cou'd I believe you, Sir, it were an affront to my virtue.

Mer. Ah! madam, whom did you expect juſt now, when, with a languiſhing ſigh, you cried, Who's there? my love? That's not a name for a huſband.

La. Trap. Since I am diſcovered, I will own——

Mer. Let me kiſs away the dear word.——Brandy and aſſafœtida, by Jupiter. [*Aſide.*

La. Trap. But will you be a man of honour?

Mer. [*aloud.*] For ever, Madam, for ever, whilſt thoſe bright eyes conquer all they behold. The devil's in it if this does not alarm ſomebody. [*Aſide.*

La. Trap. Softly, Sir, you will raiſe the houſe.

Mer. [*aſide.*] I am ſure I never wanted relief more.——

La. Trap. Ha! I am alone, in the dark, a bedchamber by: if you ſhou'd attempt my honour, who knows what the frailty of my ſex can conſent to? Or, if you ſhou'd force me, am I, a poor weak woman, able to reſiſt? Ay, but then there is law and juſtice; yet you may depend too fatally on my good-nature.

Mer. Conſider, Madam, you are in my power; remember your declaration. I had your love from your own dear lips. Conſider well the temptation of ſo much beauty, the height of my offered joys, the time, the place, and the violence of my paſſion. Think on this, madam, and you can expect no other than that I ſhould this moment ſeize on all my tranſports.

La. Trap. If you ſhou'd——Heaven forgive you.

Mer. [*louder ſtill.*] Yet, to convince you of my generoſity, you are at your liberty. I will do nothing without your conſent.

La. Trap. Then to ſhew you what a confidence I repoſe in your virtue, I vow to grant whate'er you aſk.

Mer. [*very loud.*] And to ſhew you how well I deſerve that confidence, I vow never to tempt your virtuous ears with love again; but try, by your example, to reduce licentious paſſion to pure Platonic love.

SCENE XIV.

HELENA *behind, with Sir* POSITIVE *with a broad-ſword.*

Sir Poſ. I hear 'em, I hear 'em.

La. Trap. Ha! Sir Poſitive's voice! Avaunt, nor think all thy intreaties ſhall avail againſt my virtue, or that it is in the power of all mankind to make me wrong the beſt, the kindeſt of huſbands. I ſwear, I never will, even in thought, more than at this moment.

Sir Poſ. O! incomparable virtue! what an excellent lady have I! Lights there, lights.

[*Servants bring lights.*

La. Trap. O! my dear, you are moſt ſeaſonably come; for I was hardly able to reſiſt him.

Sir Poſ. What's your buſineſs here, Sir?

Mer. My uſual buſineſs, Sir, cuckoldom. My deſign is againſt your worſhip's head and your lady's heart.

Sir Poſ. A very pretty gentleman! And ſo, Sir, you are beginning with my wife firſt?

Mer. Yes, Sir, the eaſieſt way to the huſband is through the wife.

Sir Poſ. Come away, lady wife; come away, niece. Sir, there's the door: the next time I catch you here, I may, perhaps, teach you what it is to make a cuckold of Sir Poſitive Trap.

Hel. Aſſure yourſelf I'll ſpeak to you no more.

La. Trap. Ah! the monſter!

Mer. Your monſter is gone before, Madam.——So, whilſt I am trying to blind the aunt with a pretended paſſion for her, the niece over-hears, and ſhe'll ſpeak to me no more!——There never comes any good of making love to an old woman.

SCENE XV.

SCENE, WISEMORE's *lodgings*.

WISEMORE *alone*.

How vain is human reaſon, when philoſophy cannot overcome our paſſions! when we can ſee our errors, and yet purſue them. But if to love be an error, why ſhould great minds be the moſt ſubject to it? No, the firſt pair enjoyed it in their ſtate of innocence, whilſt error was unborn.

SCENE XVI.

To him, Servant with a letter.

Serv. A letter, Sir.

WISEMORE *reads*.

SIR,

" You who are conſcious of being ſecretly my rival, " in the midſt of an intimate friendſhip, will not be " ſurpriſed when I deſire that word may be cancelled " between us, and that you wou'd not fail me to-mor" row at ſeven in Hyde-Park. Your injured

" MALVIL."

What can this mean? Ha! here's a poſtſcript.

" P. S.

"P. S. Your poor colouring of love for another
" woman, which you put on this morning,
" has confirm'd, not baffled, my ſuſpicion.
" I am certain you had no miſtreſs to meet
" at Lady Matchleſs's but Vermilia."

Who brought this letter?

Serv. A porter, Sir, who ſaid it required no anſwer.

Wiſem. What am I to think? am I in a dream? or was this writ in one? Sure madneſs has poſſeſſed the world, and men, like the limbs of a tainted body, univerſally ſhare the infection. What ſhall I do? to go, is to encounter a madman, and yet I will. Some ſtrange circumſtances may have wrought this deluſion, which my preſence may diſſipate. And, ſince love and jealouſy are his diſeaſes, I ought to pity him, who know by dreadful experience,

When love in an impetuous torrent flows,
How vainly reaſon wou'd its force oppoſe;
Hurl'd down the ſtream, like flowers before the wind,
She leaves to love the empire of the mind.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

SCENE, HYDE-PARK.

Lady MATCHLESS, VERMILIA, *maſked.*

Lady MATCHLESS.

I AM ſure I ſaw ſome one hereabouts, who, by his poſture, actions, and dreſs, muſt be my ſwain. Well, Vermilia, this ſure is the maddeſt prank—what will the world ſay?

Verm. The world is a cenſorious, ill-natur'd critic, and I deſpiſe its cavillings. Beſides, I am now grown careleſs of every thing. O, my dear, it is the moſt valuable privilege of friendſhip to diſburthen our ſecrets into one another's boſoms—If you knew thoſe of mine—I am ſure you wou'd pity me.

SCENE II.

To them WISEMORE.

La. Match. I do pity you, indeed, for ſure to be in love——

Wiſem. Is to be fooliſh, mad, miſerable—To be in love is to be in hell. [*Advancing from behind.*

La Match. Do you ſpeak from experience, Sir.

Wiſem From ſad experience—I have been in love—ſo monſtrouſly in love, that, like a bow over-bent, I am now relaxed into an oppoſite extreme—and heartily hate your whole ſex.

La. Match. Poor Cardenio! ha, ha, ha! be not ſo diſconſolate, you may yet find your Lucinda.

Wiſem. No, ſhe has loſt herſelf——and in a wilderneſs.

La. Match. How, in a wilderneſs?

Wiſem. Ay, in that town! that worſt of wilderneſſes; where follies ſpread like thorns; where men act the part of tygers, and women of crocodiles; where vice lords it like a lion, and virtue, that Phœnix, is ſo rarely ſeen, that ſhe is believed a fable——But theſe ſentiments do not pleaſe you, ſo pray leave me.

Verm. Our company, Sir, was your own choice.

La. Match. And now you have raiſed our curioſity, you ſhall lay it.

Wiſem. I would have raiſed the devil ſooner, and ſooner would I have laid him. Your curioſity, Madam, is a ſort of a hydra, which not even Hercules can tame; ſo, dear ladies, leave me, or I ſhall pull off your ſham faces——

La. Match. You would repent it, heartily, if you did.

Wiſem. Perhaps ſo. I believe, indeed, you ſhew the beſt part of you.

La. Match. You would give half your ſoul to ſee the beſt part of me.

Wiſem. Half-a-crown I will. The beſt ſight to me is your back, turn it, and away; you loſe your time, indeed you do. What can ſuch as you do with a plain honeſt man like me? Go ſeek your game: the beaus will begin to yawn preſently, and ſots return home from their debauches; ſtrike in there, and you make your fortune, at leaſt, get a dinner, which you may want by ſtaying here.

La. Match. Do not be angry, dear ruſtic—for we are both enamorata's, as well as you--nay, perhaps, I am ſo with yourſelf. Hang conſtancy, you know too much of the world to be conſtant, ſure.

Wiſem. 'Tis from a knowledge of the world, Madam, that I am conſtant.——For I know it has nothing which can pay me for the exchange.

La. Match. Come, come, you wou'd have more modern notions, if you knew that a certain woman of fortune has ſome kind thoughts of you; and, I aſſure you, I am not what I ſeem.

Wiſem. Faith, Madam, I ſhou'd not. Grandeur is to me nauſeous as a gilded pill, and fortune, as it can never raiſe any eſteem for the poſſeſſor, can never raiſe my love. My heart is no place of mercenary entertainment, nor owns more than one miſtreſs. Its ſpacious rooms are all, all hers who ſlights and deſpiſes it. Yes, ſhe has abandon'd me, and I will abandon myſelf to deſpair; ſo, pray, leave me to it, for ſuch as you can have no buſineſs with the unhappy.

La Match. Generous, worthy man! [*Aſide.* Romantic nonſenſe —I tell you I am a woman of family and fortune, perhaps beauty too, and ſo violently enamoured of your humour, that I am afraid my life is in your power.

Wiſem. Wou'd your tongue was in my power, tho' I queſtion, even then, the poſſibility of ſtopping it. I wonder the anatomy of a woman's tongue does not enable our modern philoſophers to diſcover a perpetual motion. To me, the Turkiſh yawl at an on-ſet, the Iriſh howl at a funeral, or the Indian exclamation at an eclipſe, are all ſoft muſic to that ſingle noiſe.——It has no likeneſs in nature, but a rattle-ſnake: the noiſe as odious, and the venom as dangerous.

La Match. But, like a rattle-ſnake, it gives you warning, and if you will front the danger, you muſt blame your own proweſs if you ſmart for it.

Wiſem. The ſerpent practiſes not half your wiles. He covers not his poiſon with the cloak of love. Like lawyers, you gild your deceit, and lead us to miſery, whilſt we imagine ourſelves purſuing happineſs.

La. Match. Ha, ha, ha. Piqued malice! you have loſt an eſtate for want of money, and a miſtreſs for want of wit.

Wiſem. Methinks, either of thoſe poſſeſſions ſhou'd be maintained by juſter titles—In my opinion, the only title to the firſt ſhou'd be right, and to the latter, merit, love, and conſtancy.

La. Match. Ha, ha, ha! then know, thou romantic hero, that right is a ſort of knight-errant, whom we have long ſince laughed out of the world. Merit is demerit, conſtancy dulneſs, and love an out-of-faſhion Saxon word, which no polite perſon underſtands---Lookee, Sir, pull out your purſe to a lawyer, and your ſnuff-box to a lady, and I warrant you carry your point with both.

Wiſem. The purſe may, indeed, win the lawyer; but for the other, you muſt depend on chance. You may as well teach us a certain method to gain that fickle, airy, imaginary miſtreſs, Fortune, whoſe emblems you are. For your favours are as blindly beſtowed, as fickle in their duration——and, like Fortune, you often curſe him moſt to whom you ſeem moſt kind.

SCENE III.

To them, MALVIL.

Malv. Wiſemore and women! my philoſopher turned rake! Good-morrow, Ned; I ſee a country gentleman muſt have his morning walk.

Wiſem. What does he mean? this coldneſs ill ſuits his letter. [*Aſide.*]------Ay, Sir, and you are very ſeaſonably come to my aſſiſtance, or I had been devoured by two ſhe wolves, more ravenous than any in the deſarts of America.

Malv. Nay, ladies, it was barbarous to attack with odds, when even ſingly you might have vanquiſhed.

[*Talks apart with* Vermilia.

Wiſem. Will you take away your companion, and leave us? for that gentleman and I have buſineſs.

La. Match. Not till you agree to an aſſignation. Promiſe to meet me barefaced at ten, and I am your ſervant.

Wiſem. I'll promiſe any thing to be rid of you.

La. Match. Step aſide then, and I'll give you the ſignals.

Malvil *and* Vermilia *advance.*

Verm. Indeed! ſo gallant!

Malv. O Madam, a lady is never more agreeable to me than at firſt ſight; for, to my temper, a woman palls as much by frequent converſation, as enjoyment.

Verm. But how are you ſure that firſt ſight will be agreeable?

Malv. Why, faith! as no woman has charms enough to engage my conſtancy to the laſt, ſo neither does any want enough to fire my deſires at firſt. But, if thy face be potently ugly, keep it to thyſelf, and diſcover only thy beauties. You are young, I am ſure, and well-ſhaped, have a vaſt ſhare of wit, and a very little ſhare of modeſty.

Verm. Impudence! In what, pray, have I diſcovered my want of it?

Malv. In your pretenſion to it, child; and, faith! that's better than the real poſſeſſion. What is modeſty, but a flaming ſword to keep mankind out of Paradiſe? It is a Jack-with-a-lanthorn, that miſ-leads poor women in their roads to happineſs. It is the contempt of all ſociety; lawyers call it the ſign of a bad cauſe, ſoldiers of cowardice, courtiers of ill-breeding, and women—the worſt ſign of a fool. Indeed, it has, ſometimes made a good cloak for the beauteous, tawdry outſide of a lady's reputation. But, like other cloaks, it is now out of faſhion, and worn no where but in the country.

Verm. Then to ſilence your impertinence at once, know, Sir, that I'm a woman of faſhion, rigidly virtuous, and ſeverely modeſt.

Malv. A blank verſe, faith! and may make a figure in a fuſtian tragedy. Four fine ſounding words, and mean juſt nothing at all.

Verm. I ſuppoſe theſe are the ſentiments of you modern fine gentlemen. The beaus of this age, like the critics, will not ſee perfections in others which they are ſtrangers to themſelves. You confine the maſterly hand of nature, to the narrow bounds of your own conceptions.

Malv. Why what have we here? Seneca's morals under a maſque!

Verm. I hope that title will prevent your farther peruſal.

Malv. I'll tell you a way to do it.

Verm. O, name it.

Malv. Unmaſque then. If I like your face no better than your principles, Madam, I will immediately take my leave of both.

Verm. That's an uncertainty, I'm afraid, conſidering the ſentiments you juſt now profeſſed.——Was you, indeed, that hero in love, which your friend is there?

Malv. No, faith! I have been hero in love long enough.

Verm. What woman was bleſſed with ſo faithful an admirer. Pray, what was your miſtreſs's name?

Malv. Her name was nothing. I was violently enamoured with a conſtellation of virtues in a fine lady, who had not one in her whole compoſition.

Verm. And pray, Sir, how was you cured of your love?

Malv. As children are of their fear, when they diſcover the bug-bear.

La. Match. [*advancing with* Wiſemore.] Well, you will be punctual?

Verm. O, my dear, I have met with a diſcarded lover too, full as romantic as yours.

La. Match. Say you ſo? then, I believe, theſe are the very two famed heroes in Don Quixote.

Wiſem. Shall we never loſe your prating?

La. Match. Promiſe not to dodge us.

Wiſem. Not even to look after you.

La. Match. Adieu then.

Verm. Bie, conſtancy; ha, ha, ha!

SCENE IV.

WISEMORE, MALVIL.

Wiſem. Well, Sir; you ſee I am come.

Malv. And am very ſorry to ſee it too, Ned, ha, ha, ha!

Wiſem. This reception, Sir, ill agrees with your letter. But 'twere abſurd to expect coherencies in a madman's behaviour.

Malv. What's this?

Wiſem. Was it, Sir, from my expreſſed abhorrence of this civil butchery, you pitched on me as one who wou'd give you the reputation of a duelleſt, without the danger? perhaps, you had rather met with another.

Malv. That I had, indeed.

Wiſem. Death and the devil! did you invite me here to laugh at me?

Malv. Are you mad, or in a dream?

Wiſem. He who denies to-day, what he writ yeſterday, either dreams, or worſe. Your monſtrous jealouſy, your challenge, and your preſent behaviour look like a feveriſh dream.

Malv. Invite! jealouſy! challenge! what do you mean?

Wiſem. [*ſhews a letter.*] Read there; then aſk my meaning.

Malv. [*reads.*] Ha! my letter to Merital! villainous jade! ſhe has altered the name too on the ſuperſcription. I am abuſed, indeed!

Wiſem. Well, Sir!

Malv. Wiſemore, be aſſured my ſurpriſe is equal to yours. This letter, I did, indeed, write, but not to you.

Wiſem. How!

Malv. Believe me on my honour, I did not ſend it you. His name to whom I deſigned it is eraſed, and your's ſuperſcribed, I ſuppoſe by the perſon to whom I entruſted the delivery. And, be aſſured, you was not the enemy I wiſhed to meet here.

Wiſem. What novel's this?

Malv. Faith! it may be a pleaſant one to you, and no leſs uſeful to me. But the morning is late; you ſhall go home and breakfaſt at my lodgings, and, in the way, I will let you into the whole ſtory.

Wiſem. Whatever it be which clears my friend from the imputation of ſo wild a deluſion, muſt be agreeable to me.

Malv. And now we will have our ſwing at ſatire againſt the ſex.

Wiſem. I ſhall be as ſevere as a damn'd poet is on the age.

Malv. And, perhaps, for the ſame reaſon—at leaſt the world will always give ſatire on women the names of malice and revenge——whoever aims at it, will ſucceed,

Like a detracting courtier in diſgrace,
The wiſe will ſay he only wants a place.

SCENE V.

SCENE, *Sir* POSITIVE TRAP's *houſe.*

HELEN *alone.*

Hel. Of three deplorable evils, which ſhall I chuſe? To endure the tyranny of an imperious aunt? to venture on a man whoſe inconſtancy I have been an ocular witneſs of? or ſupport the company of a fool for life? Certainly, the laſt is the leaſt terrible. I do now think our parents are wiſer than we are, and have reaſon to curb our inclinations: ſince it is a happier lot to marry a fool with a good eſtate, than a knave without one.

SCENE VI.

Sir POSITIVE, HELENA.

Sir Poſ. Are you ready? Are you prepared? Hey?

Hel. I am ſenſible, Sir, how unworthily I had fixed my heart; and I think, neither wiſdom nor honour oblige me to be undutiful to you longer.

Sir. Poſ. You are a wiſe girl! a very wiſe girl! and have conſidered doubtleſs the vaſt difference between a Baronet and a Miſter. Ha, ha! and here he comes.

SCENE VII.

To them, Sir APISH.

Sir Poſ. Sir Apiſh Simple, your humble ſervant. You are early. What, you have not ſlept a wink. I did not ſleep for a week before I was married to my lady.

Sir Apiſh. You had a very ſtrong conſtitution then, Sir Poſitive.

Sir Poſ. Ay, Sir, we are a ſtrong family, an Herculean race! Herculus was a Trap by his mother's ſide. Well, well, my niece there has given her conſent, and every thing is ready. So, take her by the hand——and——

Sir Apiſh. Upon my word, Sir Poſitive, I cannot dance a ſtep.

Sir Poſ. How! when I was as young as you, I could have danced over the moon, and into the moon too, without a fiddle. But come, I hate trifling. The lawyer is without with the deeds, and the parſon is dreſt in his Pontificalibus.

Sir Apiſh. The parſon! I ſuppoſe he is a Welch one, and plays on the violin, ha, ha, ha!

Hel. I ſee my couſin has been as good as her word. [*Aſide.*

Sir Poſ. Sir Apiſh, jeſting with matrimony, is playing with edged tools.

Sir Apiſh. Matrimony! ha, ha, ha! Sir Poſitive is merry this morning.

Sir Poſ. Sir, you will put me out of humour preſently.

Sir Apiſh. Sir, I have more reaſon to be out of humour: for you have invited me to breakfaſt, without preparing any.

Sir Poſ. Is not my niece prepared, Sir?

Sir Apiſh. Sir, I am no Cannibal.

Sir Poſ. Did you not come to marry my niece, Sir?

Sir Apiſh. Sir, I never had ſuch a thought ſince I was begotten.

Sir Poſ. The man is mad. [*Staring.*

Sir Apiſh. Poor Sir Poſitive! is it his firſt fit, Madam?

Sir Poſ. A dark room and clean ſtraw wou'd be of ſervice.

Sir Apiſh. Nay, nay, I have no time to reaſon with a madman: but I hope when you hear I am married to one of the fineſt ladies about town, it will cure your phrenzy; and ſo, Sir, your humble ſervant.

Hel. Bleſs me, Sir? what's the meaning of this?

Sir Poſ. Why, the meaning is that he is mad, and this news will make my lady mad, and that will make me mad; and you may be mad for a huſband, for what I can ſee, by the right hand of the Traps.

Hel. So. I had yeſterday two lovers; but now I have forſaken the one, and the other has forſaken me. Well, theſe men are jewels; ſo far, I am ſure, they are jewels, that the richeſt lady has always the moſt in her equipage.

SCENE VIII. *The Piazza.*

MALVIL, WISEMORE.

Malv. How! an aſſignation from Vermilia?

Wiſem. That's the name, the place this, the hour ten.

Malv. Impudent harlot!

Wiſem. She made me paſs my word to keep it ſecret from you; but when I perceived it the ſame name with that in your letter, I thought myſelf obliged by friendſhip to diſcover it. The other ſignals were a red cloak and a maſque.

Malv. Thou deareſt, beſt of friends. Ten, you ſay? it is now within an hour of the time. Since you do not intend to keep your aſſignation, I will take it off your hand. But you may yet heap another obligation on me by your preſence; for I am reſolved to expoſe her.

Wiſem. I am to meet a ſerjeant at law hard by—— but will return with all poſſible expedition, and then— if I can be of ſervice.

Malv. If you will return before the hour you will find me at Tom's, if not here.

Wiſem. Till then, farewel. How am I involving myſelf in other men's affairs, when my own require my utmoſt diligence! What courſe ſhall I take? I cannot reſolve to leave her, and I am ſure ſhe has given me no hopes of gaining her. Yet ſhe has not ſhewn any real diſlike, nor will I ever imagine her inclinations leaning to any of thoſe fops ſhe is ſurrounded with.

SCENE IX.

MERITAL, WISEMORE.

Mer. So thoughtful, Wiſemore? What point of philoſophy are you diſcuſſing?

Wiſem. One that has puzzled all who ever attempted it——Woman, Sir, was the ſubject of my contemplation.

Mer. Ha! hey! what point of the compaſs does the widow turn to now?

Wiſem. A very frozen one. Foppery.

Mer. Let me adviſe thee, Ned, to give over your attack, or change your method. For, be aſſured, widows are a ſtudy you will never be any proficient in, 'till you are initiated into that modern ſcience which the French call *le bon aſſurance.*

Wiſem. Ay, ay, we may allow you gentlemen of profeſſed gaiety thoſe known turns of raillery, ſince they were the eſtate of your fore-fathers: there is an hereditary fund of little pleaſantries which the beaus of every age enjoy, in a continual ſucceſſion.

Mer. Well, and I hope you will do thoſe of this age the juſtice to confeſs, they do not attempt any innovation in the province of wit.

Wiſem. Art thou ſo converted then as to deſpiſe the fops?

Mer. As much as thou doſt the women, I believe, Ned.

Wiſem. You miſtake me. It is their follies only I deſpiſe. But there, certainly, are women, whoſe beauty to their minds, like dreſs to their beauty, is rather a covering than an ornament.

Mer. Theſe are high flights indeed. But tell me, on what do you build your hopes of the widow?

Wiſem. On an opinion I have of her good ſenſe, and good nature. The firſt will prevent her favouring a fop, the latter may favour me.

Mer. And pray, what foundation is your opinion of her good ſenſe built on? If, as you juſt now ſeemed to think, the beaus are its ſupporters—it is a very rotten one.

Wiſem. No; when I ſaid ſhe inclined to foppery, I meant only for her diverſion.

Mer. Hum! I believe women very ſeldom take matrimony for a penance.

Wiſem. You draw too direct inferences from her conduct towards coxcombs. Depend on it they are mirrors, in which you can hardly diſcover the mind of a woman of ſenſe, becauſe ſhe ſeldom ſhews it them unmaſked. If ſhe be not a woman of ſenſe, I have, indeed, built a caſtle in the air, which every breeze of perfumes can overturn.

Mer. Why, really, it ſeems to me very little elſe, by what I know of her Ladyſhip. But you are one of thoſe reaſonable lovers who can live a day on a kind look, a week on a ſmile, and a ſoft word wou'd victual you for an Eaſt India voyage.

Wiſem. I find the converſation of a friend effaces the remembrance of buſineſs.

Mer. Any thing to the iſland of love?

Wiſem. No, no, to that of law.

Mer. Succeſs attend you— why, I have been forgetful too. But fortune, I ſee, is ſo kind as to remind me.

SCENE

SCENE X.

Sir APISH, MERITAL.

Mer. Sir Apiſh, your humble ſervant.

Sir Apiſh. Dear Tom, I kiſs your button.

Mer. That's a pretty ſuit of yours, Sir Apiſh, perfectly gay, new, and *alamode*.

Sir Apiſh. He, he, he: the ladies tell me I refine upon them. I think I have ſtudied dreſs long enough to know a little, and I have the good fortune to have every ſuit liked better than the former.

Mer. Why, indeed, I have remarked that, as your dull pretenders to wiſdom grow wiſer with their years, ſo your men of gaiety the older they grow, the finer they grow. But, come, your looks confeſs there is more in this. The town ſays it too.

Sir Apiſh. What, dear Tom?

Mer. That you are to be married, and to a Yorkſhire great fortune.

Sir Apiſh. He, he, he! I'll make you my confident in that affair. 'Tis true, I had ſuch a treaty on foot, for the girl has ten thouſand pounds, which wou'd have patched up ſome breaches on my eſtate; but a finer lady has vouchſafed to throw a hundred into my lap, and ſo I have e'en dropt the other.

Mer. What, are you in actual poſſeſſion?

Sir Apiſh. Of her heart, Sir, and ſhall be, perhaps, of every thing elſe in a day or two. Ah! ſhe's a fine creature, Tom; ſhe is the greateſt beauty, and the greateſt wit——————Pſhaw! can't you gueſs whom I mean?

Mer. No —— for I know no orange wench of ſuch a fortune.

Sir Apiſh. Why, who can be all this but lady Matchleſs?

Mer. Upon my word, I commend your exchange. Sir Apiſh, it lies in your power to do me an exquiſite favour—and, I know, you will do any thing to ſerve your friend.

Sir Apiſh. I wou'd as much as another, indeed—

why what a pox, does he intend to borrow money of me? [*Aſide.*

Yes, yes, as I was ſaying, Tom, I wou'd do any thing to ſerve a friend in neceſſity: but badneſs of tenants, two or-three ſupernumerary ſuits of laced cloaths, and a bad run of dice, have reduced me, really, to ſuch an extremity of caſh——

Mer. You miſapprehend me. You were this morning, I hear, to be married to Helena?

Sir Apiſh. And, ha, ha, ha! I muſt tell it you: I have been juſt now with Sir Poſitive Trap her uncle; and when he expected the performance of articles, I perſuaded him he was mad, laughed at him, and, with a brave front, faced him down that I knew nothing of the matter.

Mer. You ſhall go back then immediately, turn your former viſit into raillery—tho' it be a little abſurd, it will paſs on the knight—diſſemble a willingneſs to go through affairs; I will be your chaplain, and may, perhaps, go through affairs in your place.

Sir Apiſh. Is ſhe an acquaintance of yours then?

Mer. O, ay.

Sir Apiſh. Dear Tom, I am very glad I can oblige you by a reſignation, and will do to the utmoſt of my power; and to ſhew you, Sir, that I love to ſerve a friend, Sir, I'll but ſtep to the next ſtreet, and be here, Sir, at your command, Sir, in a moment, Sir.

Mer. [*ſolus.*] My rencounter with the old lady, laſt night, ſurpriſed me: there muſt have been ſome myſtery in that affair, which my diſguiſe may help me to unravel. Men of capricious tempers wou'd raiſe a hundred jealouſies on this occaſion; but it ſhall be ever my ſentiments of a miſtreſs, in all doubtful caſes—

That if ſhe's true, time will her truth diſcover;
But if ſhe's falſe, I'll be as falſe a lover.

SCENE XI.

SCENE, *Lady* MATCHLESS's *Houſe*.

Lady MATCHLESS, VERMILIA.

La. Match. Ha, ha, ha! love and ſcandal are the beſt ſweetners of tea.

Verm. The beſt embitterers, you mean; but, in my opinion, ſcandal is the ſweeteſt of the two, and leaſt dangerous.

La. Match. Love is not ſo dangerous to our ſex as you imagine. It is a warfare wherein we always get the better, if we manage prudently; men are perfect empty bullies in it; and, as a certain poet ſays——

"Swift to attack, and ſwift to run away."

Verm. Well, but what do you intend by your aſſignation?

La. Match. Only to get an excuſe for diſcarding a troubleſome lover. Lookee, Vermilia, you ſhall attack him for me; I am afraid of a diſcovery myſelf. If you can but bring him to terms, that is, if you can procure his conſent to a ſecond treaty, I ſhall be very handſomely diſengaged of mine.

Verm. You banter, ſure. But, if you are in earneſt, I muſt adviſe you to get another proxy; for I heartily hate mankind, and will forſwear any converſation with them.

La. Match. Nay, but you ſhall force your inclinations to ſerve your friend.

Verm. And, pray, what has cauſed this ſudden revolution in your temper, ſince, if I am not miſtaken, you, but yeſterday, expreſſed ſome favour for him.

La. Match. But I have found him ſuch an out-of-faſhion creature, that I am heartily aſhamed of him; beſides, I have this morning received propoſals from that prince of pretty fellows—Lord Formal.

Verm. O conſtancy! thou art a virtue.

La. Match. It is indeed. For virtues, like ſaints, are never canonized till after they are dead---which poor Conſtancy has been long ago.

Verm. I am afraid it proved abortive, and died before it was born. But if it ever had being, it was moſt certainly feminine; and, indeed, the men have been ſo modeſt to allow all the virtues to be of our ſex.

La Match. O! we are extremely obliged to them; they have found out houſewifery to belong to us too. In ſhort, they throw their families and their honour into our care, becauſe they are unwilling to have the trouble of preſerving them themſelves.

Verm. But you rally, ſure, in what you ſay concerning Lord Formal.

La Match. Fie! my dear, is a title ſo ludicrous a thing?—But, come, you ſhall undertake my aſſignation with Wiſemore.

Verm. Were I ſure it wou'd give an uneaſy moment to Malvil, I wou'd; for there is nothing I wou'd ſtick at to be revenged on him.

La. Match. When we reſolve revenge againſt our lovers, that little rogue Love ſits on his throne, and laughs till he almoſt burſts.

Tho' ne'er ſo high our rage, the rogue will find
Some little, ticklish corner in the mind,
Work himſelf in, and make the virgin kind.
When next before her feet her lover lies,
All her reſentment in a moment dies.
Then, with a ſigh, the tender maid forgives,
And love's the only paſſion that ſurvives.

ACT V. SCENE I.

SCENE, *Sir* POSITIVE'*s House.*

Sir POSITIVE, HELENA.

Sir POSITIVE.

I Say, it was your own plot, your own contrivance, your own ſtratagem. You threaten'd him to—— Hey! and he was fool enough to believe you!

Hel. He was wiſe enough to believe me: for I threaten'd no impoſſibilities. But don't put on that ſevere aſpect, dear uncle; for I proteſt it makes you look ſo like one of the Cæſar's heads in our long gallery.

Sir Poſ. Very likely, there may be a reſemblance, indeed: for Julius Cæſar, by his great grandfather's wife's great grandmother, was a Trap.

Hel. Ha, ha, ha! I am afraid we can hardly call him couſin. But pray, did he leave any legacy to us?

Sir Poſ. A ſwinging legacy! abundance of honour!

Hel. And pray what will all that honour ſell for?

Sir Poſ. Your right honour is not to be bought nor obtained; it is what a man brings into the world with him. He is as much an upſtart who gets his own honour, as he who gets his own eſtate. Take it for a maxim, child, no one can be a great man, unleſs his father has been ſo before him. Your true old Engliſh honour, like your Engliſh oak, will not come to any maturity under a hundred years. It muſt be planted by one generation for the good of another.

Hel. But if I were to chuſe a huſband, I ſhou'd be more forward to enquire into his own merits, than thoſe of his anceſtors.

Sir Poſ. Ay, ay, to be ſure. You wou'd prefer one who is likely to leave a long retinue behind him, to one who has had never ſo many glorious anceſtors before him; and be ſooner enamoured of a fine coat than a fine coat of arms. Hearkee, huſſy, moſt of theſe fine fellows are but mere ſnails, they carry their all upon their backs; and yet it is as difficult to keep our wives and daughters from the one, as our fruit from the other.

Hel. Do you think ſo, Sir? I have heard there is not a more dangerous place than a china-ſhop: take care my aunt does not bring one home in a jar, and then you may chance to ſee it pop forth its horns on the top of your cabinet.

Sir Poſ. [*aſide.*] Ha! I muſt own I do not like theſe morning rambles.

Hel. Lookee, Sir, I can make diſcoveries to you; and ſince my aunt has falſely accuſed me with being the occaſion of Sir Apiſh's behaviour to-day, I will tell you out of revenge what I would never have told you out of love. In ſhort, my aunt has——

Sir Poſ. How! what?

Hel. Planted ſomething that will branch to maturity in leſs than a hundred years, ha, ha, ha! She has ſet a modern front upon your old tabernacle, ha, ha, ha!—I hear the coach ſtop this moment. Step but into that cloſet, and you ſhall hear her convict herſelf. I'll bring her to confeſſion.

Sir Poſ. [*aſide.*] Hum! methinks, I grow ſuſpicious.

Hel. Nay, nay, nay, if you don't accept the trial, I ſhall proclaim you dare not.

Sir Poſ. Lookee, huſſy, if you wrong my lady, by the right hand of the Traps!——

Hel. Any, any puniſhment. But fly, ſhe's juſt here.

SCENE II.

Lady TRAP, HELENA.

La. Trap I am fatigued to death——Oh! your ſervant, Miſs; but perhaps I ought to ſay miſtreſs; your huſband may have changed your title ſince I ſaw you.

Hel. And your Ladyſhip may have changed your huſband's title.——But that change has been made long ago.

La. Trap. What do you mean, Madam?

Hel. Ha, ha, ha, dear aunt, the world knows the uſe of China ſhops, though Sir Poſitive does not.

La. Trap. You ſeem to know, Madam, I think, more than is conſiſtent with your years.

Hel. And you ſeem to practiſe, Madam, more than is conſiſtent with yours. The theory becomes my age much better than the practice does yours.

La. Trap. Your age! marry, come up: you are always boaſting of that youth and beauty which you have.

Hel. That's more excuſable than to boaſt of that youth and beauty which we have not.

La. Trap. I know whom you reflect on.—I thank my ſtars, indeed, I am no girl; and as for beauty, if my glaſs be allowed a judge——

Hel. A very corrupt judge: for a glaſs is ſo well-bred a thing, that it tells every woman ſhe is a beauty. O! it is the greateſt flatterer in the world to our faces; but the reverſe in one thing; for it never diſparages us behind our backs.

La. Trap. Malapert creature! A girl is now a-days no ſooner out of her leading-ſtrings than ſhe ſets up for a toaſt. And as the girls are women before their time, ſo the men are children all their lives; for they will be devouring the green fruit.

Hel. And ſure the green is preferable to the withered, aunt. Come, come, Madam, you had better make me your friend and confidant; for, if you declare war, I ſhall be able to enliſt more ſoldiers than you. But here's my hand: and if you will let me into your ſecrets, I'll give you the honour of a woman never to diſcloſe them.

SCENE III.

To them, Sir APISH, MERITAL *diſguiſed as a Parſon.*

Sir Apiſh. Lady Trap, I am your moſt obedient; ſweet miſtreſs Helena, I am everlaſtingly yours.

La. Trap. Sir Apiſh, your behaviour this morning ſtaggered us; but I am glad to find you are relapſed.

Sir Apiſh. He, he, he! it was all a jeſt, upon my word; as I queſtion not but my future behaviour will explain to that lady.

Hel. It has already explained you, Sir, to me, to be the greateſt jeſt in nature.

La. Trap. Sir Apiſh, you know too much of the world to regard a young lady's coyneſs: and I aſſure you, Sir, it is all affected; for ſhe is ever repeating your name, even in her ſleep. Don't bluſh, child. But you'll excuſe the faults of youth: ſhe will learn more ſenſe.

Hel. I don't know whether you move my anger or my pity moſt. But for that thing there, I'd have him know, I ſcorn and deteſt him.

Sir Apiſh. I wou'd not have your ladyſhip chagrin at my bride's expreſſion; for, I'll engage, we ſhall hate one another with as much good-breeding as any couple under the ſun.

Mer. Give me the permiſſion to lead you, Madam.

Sir Apiſh. [*apart to Lady* Trap.] If you'd leave miſs a few minutes with Mr Parſon here, I wou'd engage for his ſucceſs.—He is a noted match-maker.

La. Trap. Niece, pray, be attentive to that reverend gentleman; he will convince you of your errors.——Come, Sir Apiſh, we'll take a turn in the dining-room; Sir Poſitive will not be long.

[*Apart to Sir* Apiſh.

[*Theſe two ſpeeches ſpoke together.*]

Hel. [*aſide.*] Sir Poſitive is ſafe, I'm ſure, till I give him an opportunity to ſneak off; ſo I've a repreive at laſt.

S C E N E IV.

HELENA, MERITAL.

Hel. What, gone?——Ha!

Mer. Be not frightened, dear Madam; for I have nothing of ſanctity but the maſque, I aſſure you.

[*Diſcovering himſelf.*

Hel. I believe it; nor of any other virtue.

Mer. Very prettily frowned.——I know ſome ladies who have practiſed a ſmile twenty years, without becoming it ſo well.——But, come, we have no time to loſe.

Hel. No, to upbraid you were loſs of time, indeed; for the remonſtrances of an injured woman have but little weight with ſuch hardened ſinners.

Mer. Hum! the ſight of the gown has not inſpired you, I hope: you don't intend to preach; but if you do, the wedding, you know, is always before the ſermon——which is one of the chief things wherein hanging and matrimony diſagree. [*Aſide.*

Hel. Mr Merital, I lik'd your raillery well enough whilſt I believed you innocent. But as that gaiety in dreſs, which gives a bloom to beauty, ſhews deformity in its worſt light; ſo that mirth and humour, which are vaſtly amiable in the innocent, look horrid in the guilty.

Mer. Are you really in earneſt, child?

Hel. That queſtion ſurpriſes me, when you know I was witneſs to your laſt night's adventure.

Mer. Faith, my dear, I might have been more juſtly ſurpriſed, that you ſhould make me an aſſignation, and ſend your aunt to keep it.

Hel. I make you an aſſignation! I'll never ſee you more.

Mer. Turn, mighty conquereſs, turn your eyes this way,
And hear at once your prieſt and lover pray.
In vain, by frowns, you wou'd the world ſubdue,
For when with all your might, you've knit your brow,
Your grandmother more wrinkles has than you.

Ha, ha, ha, don't put on thoſe ſevere looks, dear Helena; good humour ſets off a lady's face more than jewels.

Hel. I wiſh my looks had the power to blaſt you.

Mer. No, no, Madam, I have a ſort of armour called Common Senſe, that's frown-proof, I aſſure you. Your ſmiles may melt, but your frowns will never pierce it. What, to make an aſſignation with your own hand, then ſend your aunt for a proxy? My good-nature, indeed, gave it the turn of a trial,——though ſhe was a fitter object to try my vigour than my conſtancy. [*Half aſide.*

Hel. I write to you yeſterday?

Mer. Why, I cannot ſay poſitively it was you; for I begin to think myſelf in Don Quixote's caſe, and that ſome wicked enchanters have tranſmogriphied my Dulcinea. I'll leave it to your own judgment, whether you are not a little altered ſince you writ this. [*Shews a letter.*

Hel. Ha! the letter I copied before my aunt! then I've wrong'd him indeed. Unheard-of baſeneſs!——Mr Merital, perhaps my ſuſpicions have been too ill grounded; but for your reproaches, Sir——

Mer. Nay, if there be a myſtery in it, and I am guilty of undeſerved reproaches, your juſtice cannot, ſhall not pardon me, till I have atoned for it with a ten year's ſervice. Yet impute what I have ſaid to the ſincerity of my love: my paſſions ſympathize with yours: and if one wild deluſion has poſſeſſed us, let us partake the equal joy of its diſcovery.

Hel. That diſcovery is too long to be made now: but there is a riddle in that letter which will ſurpriſe you.

Mer. Let then thoſe lovely eyes re-aſſume their ſweetneſs, and, like pure gold, riſe brighter from the flames.

Hel. Well, well, you know your own terms, a ten years ſiege, and then——

Mer. Ah! but will not the garriſon be ſtarved in that long time? and I ſhall ſhut it up with a very cloſe blockade. So you had beſt ſurrender now on honourable conditions.

Hel. Well, but you'll allow the garriſon to make a ſally firſt.——Sir Poſitive, uncle, ha, ha, ha, come and help me to laugh.——The ſame worthy gentleman who came after your wife laſt night, is now come after your niece.

SCENE V.

To them, Sir POSITIVE *from the cloſet.*

Sir Poſ. A brave girl, a very brave girl! Why, why, why, what a pox do you want here, Sir?

Hel. Bleſs me, how he ſtares! I wonder he is not confined: I am afraid he will take away ſome body's life.

Sir Poſ. I believe his intention is to give ſome body life: ſuch as he oftner increaſe families than diminiſh them.

Hel. Or perhaps the poor gentleman is an itinerant preacher. Did you come to preach to us, Sir?

Mer. Do you take me for the ordinary of Bedlam, Madam? Was I to reaſon with you, it ſhould be by the doctrine of fire and faggot.

Hel. Say you ſo? Nay then I believe, uncle, he is a popiſh inquiſitor.

Sir Poſ. An inquiſitor after fortunes, I ſuppoſe. Ah! Sir, is not that your pious errand? You are one of the royal ſociety of fortune-hunters? eh!

Hel. I'll ſecure his maſquerading garb among the trophies of our family.

SCENE VI.

Sir POSITIVE, MERITAL.

Sir Poſ. Well, Sir, and pray have you any pretenſions to my niece? Where's your eſtate, Sir? what's your title, Sir? what's your coat of arms? Does your eſtate lie in *Terrâ Firmâ*, or in the ſtocks?

Mer. In a ſtock of aſſurance, Sir. My caſh is all braſs, and I carry it in my forehead, for fear of pick-pockets.

Sir Poſ. Are there no guardians to be cheated, no cuckolds to be made, but Sir Poſitive Trap? I'd have you know, Sir, there has not been a cuckold amongſt the Traps ſince they were a family.

Mer. That is, Sir I ſuppoſe, a tacit inſinuation that you are the firſt of your family.

Sir Poſ You are ignorant as well as impudent. The firſt of my family! The whole world knows, that neither I, nor my father before me, have added one foot of land to our eſtate, and my grandfather ſmoaked his pipe in the ſame eaſy chair that I do.

Mer. Very likely.—And what then?

Sir Poſ. What then! Why, then there's the door, and then I deſire you'd go out. Upſtart, quotha! Sir Poſitive Trap an upſtart! I had rather be called knave. I had rather be the firſt rogue of a good family, than the firſt honeſt man of a bad one.

Mer. Indeed!

Sir Poſ. Ay, indeed; for do not we upbraid the ſon whoſe father was hanged? whereas, many a man who deſerves to be hanged, was never upbraided in his whole liſe.

Mer. Oons! how I am jilted! [*Aſide.*
Lookee, Sir Poſitive, to be plain, I did come hither

with a deſign of inveigling your niece; but ſhe ſhall now die a maid for me. I impoſed on Sir Apiſh, as I wou'd have done on you; but you ſee I have failed: ſo you may ſmoak on in your eaſy chair, Sir Trap.

Sir Poſ. So, ſo, I began to ſuſpect Sir Apiſh was in the plot; but I'm glad to find my miſtake.

SCENE VII.

Sir POSITIVE, *Lady* TRAP.

Sir Poſ. O, my dear lady, are you come? I have ſuch a diſcovery! ſuch a rare diſcovery! you will ſo hug me——

La. Trap. Not ſo cloſe as you do your diſcovery, my dear.—— Put where's Helena?

Sir Poſ. He, he, he, rogue! conjuror! My lady's a conjuror! why, 'tis about her I am going to diſcover. But where's the baronet?

La. Trap. He waits below with his chaplain.

Sir Poſ. His chaplain! ha, ha, ha! 'tis a rogue in the chaplain's habit: the wild young ſpark that has haunted my niece ſo long.

La. Trap. How!

Sir Poſ. Ay, and he hath ſtole off with his diſguiſe, which the girl has ſecured as a trophy of her victory.

La. Trap. Cheated! ruined! undone!

Sir Poſ. Ha! what?

La. Trap. She is gone, ſhe is loſt—without there—ſhe's gone, I ſay, and we are cheated.

Sir Poſ. How, by the right hand of the Traps!

La. Trap. By the wrong head of the Traps. I thought what your diſcovery would be.——Where's Sir Apiſh? [*To a ſervant entering.*

Serv. Gone out with his chaplain, and another gentleman, madam.

La. Trap. Purſue them, purſue them.

Sir Poſ. Get down my broad-ſword and bandaliers, and Sir Gregory's blunderbuſs. Fly, fly.

SCENE VIII.

SCENE, *The Piazza.*

MALVIL, *meeting* CATCHIT *maſqued.*

Malv. So, I find ſhe's exact to her aſſignation.—Well encountered, madam: what, I ſuppoſe I am not the game you look for. O thou perfidious, falſe, diſſembling woman. Nay, do not offer to ſtir, for you are betrayed, and by all the powers of love you've wrong'd, I will expoſe you. Come, unmaſque, unmaſque this inſtant, or ———

Catch. [*unmaſquing*] I proteſt you are very rude, Mr Malvil; I wou'd not be ſeen here for the world.

Malv. Ha! now I thank my ſtars, indeed. Thou vile intriguer, forge ſome lie to excuſe thyſelf in an inſtant, or it ſhall be thy laſt.

Catch. O lud! you will frighten me into fits.

Malv. Come, confeſs how you came here? by what means did Wiſemore get my letter? Confeſs all; and if I find you faultering in one ſyllable, I'll cram it down your throat with my ſword.

Catch. O lud! I—I—I——

Malv. What, you belied Vermilia in all you ſaid? Speak ——you belied her, I ſay?

Catch. O! O! but will you pardon me then?

Malv. Speak the truth, I will pardon you; but if I ever diſcover the leaſt falſehood in what you now tell me, if you had a thouſand lives you ſhou'd forfeit them.

Catch. Why then, indeed, it was all falſe: ſhe never ſaid a kind thing of Mr Merital in her life——and—and ſo, when you gave me the letter, I ſuſpected what it was, and ſo I carried it to my miſtreſs; and Lady Matchleſs being by, ſhe took it, and ſealed, and ſent it to Mr—and ſo, my Lady and ſhe went into the Park this morning; and Lady Matchleſs made an appointment in her name, and wou'd have had her kept it, and ſhe wou'd not—and ſo I was ſent.

Malv. And how!——how did the devil tempt you to belie her to me?

Catch. O lud! Sir, it was not the devil, indeed!

but you had often teazed and promiſed me, if I wou'd diſcover your rival; and, heaven knows, you have none in the world.

Malv. But on what embaſſy was you ſent hither?

Catch. Here's a letter, which, I believe, will tell you. But pray don't keep me, for we are all very buſy; my lady Matchleſs is to be married in a day or two to my lord Formal.

Malv. How! to my lord Formal?

Catch. Yes, Sir.

Malv. Well, tell her you delivered the letter as you was ordered. Don't mention a word of me.---Be truſty now, and I'll forgive the paſt.

Catch. I will, indeed, Sir---O lud! I ſhall not recover it this week.

SCENE IX.

MALVIL, WISEMORE.

Malv. Wiſemore, moſt opportunely arrived. I find you are more concerned in this aſſignation than I imagined, as this will explain to you.

WISEMORE *takes the letter, and reads.*

"SIR,

"You will be ſurpriſed at the news of ſo ſudden "a conqueſt; but, I hope, that ſurpriſe will be an "agreeable one, when you know it is over a woman "of a conſiderable fortune: and if ſeven thouſand "a-year can make me as acceptable to Mr Wiſemore "as his virtue renders him lovely to me, I ſhall meet "with a favourable anſwer; for which the meſſenger "who brings you this will attend, an hour after the "delivery. Yours till then, INCOGNITA.

"P. S. I am glad I can inform you, that my rival is this day to be married to another."

How received you this letter?

Malv. From the very perſon who convey'd you mine.

Wiſem. O Malvil, I find myſelf concerned, indeed, and, I fear, fatally.

Malv. I am ſorry to be the meſſenger of ill news —— but I juſt now heard your miſtreſs is carrying on a treaty with one of the greateſt coxcombs in town.

Wiſem. There is but one way, and I muſt beg your immediate aſſiſtance. I have contrived a ſtratagem to convince her of the mercenary views of her pretended admirers.

Malv. But do you draw any of your fears from that letter? For I have very good reaſon to believe it came from Lady Matchleſs.

Wiſem. Impoſſible!

Malv. I am confident it did.

Wiſem. By Heav'n, thou haſt revived a ſpark of hope.

Malv. And lovers muſt nurſe up feeble, infant hopes till they grow big, and ripen into certain joys.

Wiſem. I will do ſo: for I have always looked on love as on a ſea, whoſe latitude no one ever diſcovered; and therefore,

Like mariners, without the compaſs toſt,
We may be near our port, when we eſteem it loſt.

SCENE X.

SCENE, *Lady* MATCHLESS'*s Houſe.*

Lady MATCHLESS, *Lord* FORMAL, *Sir* APISH, VERMILIA, *and* RATTLE.

La. Match. I hope the ſincerity which I have diſcovered in your lordſhip's paſſion, and the glorious character you bear in the world, will excuſe my eaſy conſent.

L. Form. I wou'd not be ſo ill-bred as to bluſh; but your ladyſhip's compliments have really raiſed an inordinate fluſhing in my cheeks.

Verm. Why, my dear, this will be a ſurprize to the town, indeed.

Rattle. I'm ſure it is no agreeable one to me. [*Aſide.*
Why, widow, do you intend to leave me in the lurch?

Sir Apiſh. And me in the lurch too, Madam? I aſſure you, I have refuſed a great fortune on your account. Has your ladyſhip forgot your declaration yeſterday?

La. Match. Yeſterday! O unpolite! are you ſo converſant in the *beau-monde*, and don't know that women, like quickſilver, are never fixed till they are dead?

Rattle. Agad, they are more like gold, I think; for they are never fixed but by droſs. [*Aſide.*

S C E N E XI.

To them, MERITAL, HELENA.

Hel. Dear couſin Matchleſs!

La. Match. My dear, this is very kind; being earlier with me than my expectation, is a double favour.

Mer. It may be called a double favour, Madam, for you are partly obliged for it to your humble ſervant.

La. Match. How's this, Helena?

Hel. I don't know, couſin; I was weary of my old guardian, I think, and ſo I choſe a new one.

Mer. Yes, Madam, and we preferred the church to the chancery, to ſave expences.

La. Match. O, it was a moſt commendable prudence. So you are married.——Well, give you joy, good people.——But, methinks, you ſhou'd not have made your guardian your heir. [*To* Helena.] No wiſe perſon ever ſuffered an heir to be truſtee to his own eſtate.

Mer. Not till at years of diſcretion, Madam; and, I'm ſure, the men ſhou'd be that when they marry.

La. Match. And the women too, or they never will.

Hel. Why ſo, couſin?

La. Match. Becauſe it is probable they may ſoon after run mad. You ſee, my Lord, I have not the higheſt notions of a married ſtate; therefore, you may be ſenſible how high an opinion I muſt entertain of your merit, which can perſuade me to it.

Mer. Do you intend to follow our example, Lady Matchleſs?

Rattle. I can bear no longer. Lookee, my lord, if matrimony be your play, fighting muſt be your prologue. [*Apart to lord* Formal.

L. Form. He, he, he! Mr Rattle, fighting is more commonly the epilogue to that play.

Rattle. Damn your joke, Sir, either walk out with me, or I ſhall uſe you ill. [*Apart.*

L. Form. Then you will ſhew your ill-breeding, and give me an opportunity of diſplaying my gallantry, by ſacrificing the affront to the preſence of the ladies.

Mer. Fie, fie, gentlemen, let us have no quarrels, pray.

Rattle. 'Sdeath! Sir, but we will; I ſhall not reſign my miſtreſs, Sir.

Sir Apiſh. Nor I neither; and ſo, Madam, if you don't ſtand to your promiſe, I hope you'll give me leave to ſue you for it.

La. Match. I have told you already that a lady's promiſe is an inſect which naturally dies almoſt as ſoon as it is born.

SCENE XII.

To them, WISEMORE *in a Serjeant's gown, his hat over his ears.*

Wiſem. Pray, which is the Lady Matchleſs?

La. Match. Have you any buſineſs with me, Sir?

L. Form. This muſt be a very ill-bred gentleman, or he wou'd not come before ſo much good company with his hat on. [*Aſide.*

Wiſem. It concerns an affair, Madam, which will be ſoon ſo public, that I may declare it openly. There is one Mr John Matchleſs, who, being heir at law to your ladyſhip's late huſband, intends to proſecute his right, which, as his council, out of a particular regard to your ladyſhip, I ſhall farther let you know, I am perſuaded we ſhall make good—and, I'm afraid, it will touch you very ſenſibly.

La. Match. My couſin John Matchleſs heir at law to Sir William! I wou'd not have you be under any apprehenſion on my account, good Sir; I am afraid he has a better right to Bedlam than my eſtate.

Mer. Be not concerned, Madam; a declaration of a title is not always a proof.

Verm. } We condole you heartily, my dear, on
Hel. } this bad news.

La. Match. Ladies, I thank you for your kind concern; but do aſſure you, it gives me none.

Wiſem. I am ſenſible you will find your error; my clerk will be here immediately with the ejectment.

L. Form. I perceive the reaſon of her ladyſhip's haſte to be married. [*Aſide.*

La. Match. What can this mean! I know my title to be ſecure: it muſt be ſome trumped up cheat: and I'll try to divert the chagrin of my friends by a trial of my lovers, whom I already know, I ſhall find guilty. [*Aſide.*]—— Well, as moſt misfortunes bring their allay with them, ſo this diſpute of my eſtate will give me an opportunity to diſtinguiſh the ſincerity of a lover. [*Looks on* Formal.

L. Form. He, he, he! it has always been my good fortune to conduce to the entertainment of the ladies, and I find your ladyſhip has a moſt inexhauſtible vein of raillery.

La. Match. Raillery, my lord!

L. Form. Ah! Madam, it were an unpardonable vanity in me to eſteem it otherwiſe. It wou'd be contrary to all the rules of good-manners for me to offer myſelf up at the ſhrine of your beauty. Ah! 'tis a ſacrifice worthy a higher title than mine. Indeed, I have ſome thoughts of purchaſing, which when I do, I ſhall throw myſelf at your feet in raptures; but till then, I am, with the greateſt diſtance, Madam, your ladyſhip's moſt obſequious humble ſervant.

Rattle. Why, indeed, I think all raillery is unſeaſonable on ſo ſerious an occaſion; therefore, to drop the jeſt, dear widow, I do aſſure you, all that has paſſed between us has been mere gallantry; for I have been long ſince engaged to a widow lady in the city.

Sir Apiſh. And to ſhew you, Madam, that no ſlights from you can leſſen my affection, I do entirely relinquiſh all pretenſions to any promiſe whatſoever.

SCENE

SCENE XIII.

To them, MALVIL.

Malv. Where's, where's my injured miſtreſs? where's Vermilia? O, ſee at your feet the moſt miſerable of mankind.

Verm. What mean you, Sir?

Malv. Think not I wou'd extenuate; no, I come to blazon out my crimes, to paint them in the utmoſt caſt of horror, to court, not fly, the ſeverity of juſtice; for death's to me a bleſſing. Ah! my friend's blood cries out for vengeance on me; and jealouſy, rage, madneſs, and falſe honour, ſtand ready witneſſes againſt me. — [*To* Vermilia.] Of you, Madam, I am to beg a pardon for your wronged innocence——[*To Lady* Match.] But to you I have a harder taſk; to implore it, for having deprived you of the beſt of lovers, whoſe dying ſighs were loaded with your name. ——Yes, the laſt words your Wiſemore uttered, were to implore eternal bleſſings on you; your Wiſemore, whom this raſh, this fatal hand has ſlain.

[*Lady* Matchleſs *ſinks into the arms of* Vermilia.

Mer. Help, help, ſhe faints!

Hel. A glaſs of water, the hartſhorn immediately.

Rattle. Ruſtic's dead then, hey? Poor Ruſtic!

Verm. How do you, dear?

La. Match. O! I ſhall rave, my frantic brain will burſt? and did he bleſs me with his lateſt breath? he ſhould have curſed me rather, for I alone am guilty. Oh! I have wildly played away his life. Then take my fortune all, ſince he is gone, to reward whoſe merit I only valued riches. But now farewell content, greatneſs, happineſs, and all the ſweets of life.—I'll ſtudy to be miſerable.

Wiſem. O never, never; be bleſſed as love and life and happineſs can make you——be bleſſed as I am now. [*Diſcovering himſelf, and running to her.*

La Match. And art thou then my Wiſemore?

[*After a long pauſe.*

Wiſem. And do I live to hear you call me yours? O my heart's joy! my everlaſting bliſs!

La. Match. And can you generouſly forgive?

Wiſem. O name it not, but ſwear you never will revoke what you have ſaid.

La. Match. O, would I had worlds to give thee; for all the happineſs I can beſtow is nothing to the merit of your love.

Wiſem. My heart o'erflows with raptures. Oh! my tender love, now do I live indeed——

Mer. Why, after theſe high flights, Ned, I am afraid wiſhing you joy will be too low a phraſe.

Wiſem. Dear Merital, I thank you.—But here am I eternally indebted; for I ſhall always attribute my happineſs (next to this lady) to your friendſhip. [*To* Malvil.

Malv. Be aſſured it gives me an equal ſatisfaction, as if I had procured my own.

Mer. I have known two friends embrace juſt before cutting of throats; but I believe you are the firſt who ever embraced after it.

Rattle. Formal. [*Sheepiſhly.*

L. Form. By my title, I am perfectly amazed.

Sir Apiſh. We are all bit, agad! [*Aſide.*

Mer. Come, Harry, put the beſt face you can on the matter; though I know you have a little chagrin in your heart.——As for his Lordſhip, the lady may be a widow again before he gets his title——And my friend Sir Apiſh has refuſed a very fine lady this morning before.

Sir Apiſh. Yes, I had two ſtrings to my bow; both golden ones, agad! and both cracked.

Verm. Dear Matchleſs, this ſudden revolution of your fortune has ſo amazed me, that I can hardly recover myſelf to congratulate you on it.

La. Match. Well, but I hope you will not ſee your friend embarked on a ſecond voyage, and heſitate at undertaking the firſt.

Verm. If I were ſure my voyage wou'd be as ſhort as yours has been; but matrimony is too turbulent a ſea to be ventured on in ſo light a veſſel as every little blaſt can overſet.

Malv. Madam, when Mrs Catchit has diſcovered the whole affair to you as ſhe has done to me, I doubt not but your good-nature will ſeal my pardon, ſince exceſs of love cauſed the offence.

La. Match. Nay, we muſt all ſue.

Mer.
Hel. } All, all.

Verm Well, to avoid ſo much importunity, and to ſhew you the power of a prevalent example—In hopes of future amendment, Mr Malvil, here—take my hand.

Malv. O my faireſt, ſofteſt, I have no words to expreſs my gratitude, or my love.

Verm. Pray, let them both be underſtood then; for we have had ſo many raptures already, they muſt be but a dull repetition.

L. Form. When it is in vain to ſtrive againſt the ſtream, all well-bred men ſail with it. [*Aſide.* Ladies, I beg leave to preſume to advance with my compliments of congratulation on this glorious occaſion. I muſt own your ladyſhip's choice has ſomething novel in it; but, by the ſanction of ſo great an authority, I don't queſtion but it may be reconciled with the rules of conſummate good-breeding.

Sir Apiſh. I am always his Lordſhip's ſecond, Ladies, I heartily wiſh you joy, upon my word.

Rattle. And ſo do I, widow—This fellow will be poiſoned before the honey-moon's out. [*Aſide.*

SCENE *the laſt.*

Sir POSITIVE TRAP, *Lady* TRAP, *Lady* MATCHLESS, *Lord* FORMAL, VERMILIA, HELENA, WISEMORE, MALVIL, MERITAL, RATTLE, *Sir* APISH SIMPLE.

Sir Poſ. O couſin, I am undone, and ruined! The Traps are abuſed, diſgraced, diſhonoured!

La. Match. What's the matter, Sir Poſitive?

Sir Poſ. I am undone, my niece is loſt and ruined.

Hel. I had been ſo, Sir, but for the interpoſition of a worthy gentleman here.

Mer. It is, indeed, my happy fate to be——

Sir Poſ. Is it ſo? is it ſo? and, I believe, this will be your happy fate. [*Pointing to his neck.* She is an heireſs, and you are guilty of felony, and

ſhall

ſhall be hanged, with the whole company, your abettors.

L. Form. This gentleman muſt have had a barbarous education. [*Aſide*.

Mer. Lookee, Madam, as you expect that what has paſſed between us ſhall be kept ſecret—[*to lady* Trap.

La. Trap. [*to* Mer.] I underſtand you—— —Sir Poſitive, be appeaſed, and leave this matter to me.

Sir Poſ. I am calm.

La. Match. My couſin, Sir, is married to a gentleman of honour, and one who, I doubt not, loves her. —By your reſentment, you will call your conduct, not hers, into queſtion.

Sir Poſ. Then you have been her adviſer, I ſuppoſe.

La. Match. If I have, couſin, you cannot be angry, ſince it is an advice I am like to follow myſelf.

Sir Poſ. Why, what, are you going to be married again?

Wiſem. Sir Poſitive, I hope ſhortly to be your relation.

Sir Poſ. That's more than I do, Sir, till I know your name and family.

Wiſem. You ſhall both, Sir. My name is Wiſemore.

Sir Poſ. Wiſemore! Wiſemore! why, it is a good name---- but I thought that family had been extinct. ——Well, couſin, I am glad to ſee you have not married a ſnuff-box.

La. Match. To perfect the good-humour of the company, and ſince dinner is not yet ready, I'll entertain you with a ſong, which was ſent me by an unknown hand. Is Mr Hemhem there? Sir, if you will oblige us. Gentlemen and ladies, pleaſe to ſit.

SONG.

I.

Ye nymphs of Britain, to whoſe eyes
The world ſubmits the glorious prize
Of beauty to be due;
Ah! guard it with aſſiduous care,
Let neither flattery enſnare,
Nor wealth your hearts ſubdue.

II.

Old Bromio's rank'd among the beaus;
Young Cynthio ſolitary goes,
Unheeded by the fair!
Aſk you then what this preference gives?
Six Flanders mares the former drives,
The latter but a pair.

III.

Let meaner things be bought and ſold,
But beauty never truck'd for gold;
Ye fair, your value prove:
And ſince the world's a price too low,
Like Heaven, your ecſtaſies beſtow
On conſtancy and love.

IV.

But ſtill, ye generous minds, beware,
Since hypocrites to Heaven there are
And to the beauteous too:
Do not too eaſily confide,
Let every lover well be try'd,
And well reward the true.

The COMPANY *advance.*

Wiſem. The ſong is not without a moral.——And now, ladies, I think myſelf bound to a ſolemn recantation of every ſlander I have thrown upon your ſex: for I am convinced, that our complaints againſt you flow generally (if not always) more from our want of merit than your want of juſtice.

For when vain fools or fops your hearts purſue,
To ſuch the charming prize is never due.
But when the men of ſenſe their paſſions prove,
You ſeldom fail rewarding them with love:
Juſtly on them the fair their hearts beſtow,
Since they, alone, the worth of virtue know.

EPILOGUE.

Spoken by Miſs ROBINSON, jun.

OUR author, full of ſorrow and repentance,
Has ſent me here, to mitigate his ſentence.
To you tremendous critics in the pit,
Who on his firſt offence in judgment ſit!
He pleads—Oh gad! how terrible his caſe is!
For my part, I am frighten'd by your faces.
Think on his youth—it is his firſt eſſay;
He may in time, perhaps,—atonemeut pay,
If but repriev'd this execution-day—
Methinks I ſee ſome elder critic riſe,
And darting furious juſtice from his eyes,
Cry, "Zounds! what means the brat? why all this fuſs?
"What are his youth and promiſes to us?
"For ſhou'd we from ſeverity refrain,
"We ſoon ſhou'd have the coxcomb here again.
"And, brothers, ſuch examples may invite
"A thouſand other ſenſeleſs rogues to write!"
From you then—ye toupets—he hopes defence:
You'll not condemn him—for his want of ſenſe—
What, now you'll ſay, I warrant, with a ſneer,
"He's choſe too young an advocate, my dear!"
Yet boaſt not (for if my own ſtrength I know)
I am a match ſufficient—for a beau!
Laſtly, to you, ye charmers, he applies,
For in your tender boſoms mercy lies,
As certain as deſtruction in your eyes.
Let but that lovely circle of the fair
Their approbation, by their ſmiles declare,
Then let the critics damn him—if they dare.

THE

THE

TEMPLE BEAU.

A

COMEDY.

First Acted in 1729.

Non aliter, quam qui adverſo vix flumine lembum
Remigiis ſubigit. VIRG. Georg.

Indignor quidquam reprehendi, non quia craſsè
Compoſitum, illepidève putetur, ſed quia nobis.
HOR. Art. Poet.

PROLOGUE.

Written by Mr RALPH, and ſpoken by Mr GIFFARD.

HUMOUR and wit, in each politer age,
Triumphant, rear'd the trophies of the ſtage:
But only farce, and ſhew, will now go down,
And HARLIQUIN'S *the darling of the town.*
WILL'*s has reſign'd its old pretence to wit,*
And beaus appear where critics us'd to ſit.
BUTTON *himſelf, provok'd at wit's decline,*
Now lets his houſe, and ſwears he'll burn his ſign.
Ah! ſhou'd all others that on wit depend,
Like him, provok'd; like him, their dealings end;
Our Theatres might take th' example too,
And Players ſtarve themſelves--- as Authors do.
But, if the gay, the courtly world, diſdain
To hear the muſes and their ſons complain;
Each injur'd bard ſhall to this refuge fly,
And find that comfort which the Great deny:
Shall frequently employ this infant ſtage,
And boldly aim to wake a dreaming age.
The comic muſe, in ſmiles ſeverely gay,
Shall ſcoff at vice, and laugh its crimes away.
The voice of ſorrow pine in tragic lays,
And claim your tears, as the ſincereſt praiſe.
Merit, like Indian gems, is rarely found;
Obſcure, 'tis ſullied with the common ground:
But when it blazes in the world's broad eye,
All own the charms, they paſs'd unheeded by.
Be you the firſt t'explore the latent prize,
And raiſe its value, as its beauties riſe.
Convince that town, which boaſts its better breeding,
That riches———are not all that you exceed in.
Merit, wherever found, is ſtill the ſame,
And this our ſtage may be the road to fame.

Dramatis Personæ.

MEN.

Sir AVARICE PEDANT,	Mr Collet.
Sir HARRY WILDING,	Mr Penkethman.
WILDING,	Mr Giffard.
VEROMIL,	Mr W. Giffard.
VALENTINE,	Mr Williams.
PEDANT,	Mr Bullock,
PINCET,	Mr Bardin.

WOMEN.

Lady LUCY PEDANT,	Mrs Giffard.
Lady GRAVELY,	Mrs Haughton.
BELLARIA,	Mrs Purden,
CLARISSA,	Mrs Seal.

Taylor, Perriwig-maker, Servants, *&c*,

SCENE, LONDON,

THE

TEMPLE BEAU.

ACT I. SCENE I.

SCENE, *An Antichamber in Sir* AVARICE PEDANT'S Houſe.

Lady LUCY PEDANT, Lady GRAVELY.

Lady LUCY *entering in a paſſion, followed by the Lady* GRAVELY.

NO more of your lectures, dear ſiſter. Muſt I be fatigu'd every morning, with an odious repetition of fulſome, dull, antiquated maxims, extracted from old philoſophers and divines, who no more practiſed what they wrote, than you practiſe what you read? Sure, never woman had ſuch a time on't!—between a huſband mad with avarice, a ſon-in-law mad with learning, a niece mad with love—and a ſiſter——

L. Gra. Ay, what am I? I'd be glad to know what I am.

L. Lucy. The world knows what you are——

L. Gra. How, madam!——the world knows nothing of me.

L. Lucy. It ſays, it does; it talks of you very freely, child. Firſt, that you are not ſo young as you would ſeem; nor ſo handſome, or good, as you do ſeem; that your actions are as much diſguiſed by your words, as your ſkin by paint; that the virtue in your mouth, no more proceeds from the purity of your heart, than the colour in your cheeks does from the purity of your blood.

L. Gra. Very fine, indeed!

L. Lucy. That your ardency to reprove the world, is too often rank envy; that you are not angry with the deformities of the mind, but the beauties of the perſon: for it is notorious, that you never ſpoke well of a handſome woman, nor ill of an ugly one.

L. Gra. Impudent ſcandal!

L. Lucy. That you rail at the diverſions of the town, for ſeveral reaſons; but the love of goodneſs has nothing to do with any. Aſſemblies, becauſe you are very little regarded in them; operas, becauſe you have no ear; plays, becauſe you have no taſte; balls, becauſe you can't dance: and, laſtly—that you went to church twice a-day, a whole year and half, becauſe —you was in love with the parſon: ha, ha, ha!

L. Gra. As ill as that malicious ſmile becomes you, I am glad you put it on: for it convinces me, that what you have ſaid is purely your own ſuggeſtion, which I know how to deſpiſe. Or, perhaps, you call a ſet of flirts, the world: by ſuch a world, I would always be ſpoken ill of: the ſlander of ſome people, is as great a recommendation, as the praiſe of others. For one is as much hated by the diſſolute world, on the ſcore of virtue, as by the good, on that of vice. Siſter, your malicious invectives againſt me, reflect on yourſelf only: I abhor the motive, and I ſcorn the effect.

L. Lucy. Nay, but how ungenerous is this! when you have often told me, that to put one in mind of faults, is the trueſt ſign of friendſhip; and that ſincerity in private ſhould give no more pain, than flattery in public, pleaſure.

L. Gra And yet (methinks) you could not bear plain dealing juſt now. But I'm glad that your laſt hint has awakened me to a perfect ſenſe of my duty; therefore, ſiſter, ſince we are in private, I'll tell you what the world ſays of you.——In the firſt place, then, it ſays, that you are both younger and handſomer than you ſeem.

L. Lucy. Nay, this is flattery, my dear!

L. Gra. No indeed, my dear! for that folly and affectation have diſguiſed you all over with an air of dotage and infirmity.

L. Lucy. This carries an air of ſincerity——thank you, my dear.

L. Gra. That admiration is the greateſt pleaſure, and to obtain it the whole buſineſs of your life; but that the ways you take to it are ſo prepoſterous, one would be almoſt perſuaded, you aimed rather at contempt: for the actions of an infant ſeem the patterns of your conduct. When you are in the play-houſe, you ſeem to think yourſelf on the ſtage; and when you are at church, I ſhould ſwear you thought yourſelf in the play-houſe, did I not know you never think at all. In every circle you engroſs the whole converſation, where you ſay a thouſand ſilly things, and laugh at them all; by both which the world is always convinced, that you have very fine teeth, and very bad ſenſe.

L. Lucy. Well, I will convince you, for I muſt laugh at that; ha, ha, ha.

L. Gra. That you are not reſtrained from unlawful pleaſures by the love of virtue, but variety; and that your huſband is not ſafe from having no rival, but from having a great many; for your heart is like a coffee-houſe, where the beaus friſk in and out, one after another; and you are as little the worſe for them as the other is the better: for one lover, like one poiſon, is your antidote againſt another.

L. Lucy. Ha, ha, ha, I like your compariſon of love and poiſon, for I hate them both alike.

L. Gra. And yet you are in love, and have been in love a long while.

L. Lucy. Dear ſoul, tell me who the happy creature is, for I'm ſure he'll think himſelf ſo.

L. Gra. That I queſtion not; for I mean yourſelf.

L. Lucy. Ha, ha, ha, and I'm ſure you like my taſte.

L. Gra. In ſhort, to end my character, the world gives you the honour of being the moſt finiſhed coquet in town.

L. Lucy. And I believe it is as little news to you, that you have that of leading the vaſt, grave, ſolemn body of prudes: ſo let us be friends——ſince, like the fiery partiſans of ſtate, we aim only at the ſame thing, by ſeveral ways. their aim is a place at court—ours is this, my dear ſiſter!

L. Gra. (Now would my arms were fire-brands—I would embraee you then with better will.) [*Aſide.*

SCENE II.

To them, Young PEDANT.

Y. Ped. Heyday! what, is it cuſtomary here for you women to kiſs one another. It intimates the men to be ſcarce, or backward, in my opinion.

L. Lucy. And ſo, taking advantage of the dearth of gallants, you are come to town to be enrolled in the number.

Y. Ped May I be expelled the univerſity that day! if your women want fools till I turn one to pleaſe them, they ſhall want them——till their fools turn ſcholars like me, or till they themſelves turn Penelopes, that is (*breviter*) till the world's turn'd topſy-turvy.

L. Lucy. Or, till ſuch illiterate pedants as you turn fine gentlemen.

Y. Ped. Illiterate! mother-in-law?——You are a woman. [*Scornfully.*

L. Lucy. You are a coxcomb.

Y. Ped. I rejoice in the irony. To be called coxcomb by a woman is as ſure a ſign of ſenſe, as to be called rogue by a courtier is of honeſty.

L. Gra. You ſhould except your relations, nephew; and truly, for the generality of women, I am much of your opinion.

Y. Ped Are you? then you are a woman of ſenſe, aunt; a very great honour to your ſex.

L. Lucy. Did you ever hear ſo conceited, ignorant a wretch!

Y Ped. Ignorant!——Know, Madam, that I have revolv'd more volumes, than you have done pages; I might ſay lines. More ſenſe has gone in at theſe eyes—

L. Lucy. Than will ever come out at that mouth, I believe.——Ha, ha, ha!

Y. Ped. What do you laugh at? I could convince you, that what you ſaid then was only falſe wit. Look ye, mother, when you have been converſant with the Greek poets, you'll make better jeſts.

L. Lucy. And when you have convers'd with a French dancing-maſter, you'll make a better figure; till when, you had beſt converſe with yourſelf. Come, ſiſter.

Y. Ped. Sooner than converſe with thee, may I be oblig'd to communicate with a drunken, idle, illiterate ſoph: a creature, of all, my averſion.

SCENE III.

Sir AVARICE PEDANT, *and Young* PEDANT.

Sir Av. How now, ſon! what puts you in this paſſion? I never knew any thing got by being in a paſſion.

Y. Ped. Sir, with your peace, I am not in a paſſion; I have read too much philoſophy, to have my paſſions irritated by women.

Sir Av. You ſeem, indeed, to have read a great deal; for you ſaid ſeveral things laſt night beyond my underſtanding: but I deſire you wou'd give me ſome account of your improvement in that way which I recommended to you at your going to the univerſity: I mean that uſeful part of learning, the arts of getting money: I hope your tutor has, according to my orders, inſtill'd into you a tolerable inſight into ſtock-jobbing. I hope to ſee you make a figure at Garaway's, boy.

Y. Ped. Sir, he has inſtructed me in a much nobler ſcience——Logic——I have read all that has been written on that ſubject, from the time of Ariſtotle to that great and learned modern, Burgerſdicius; truly, almoſt a cart-load of books.

Sir Av. Have they taught you the art to get a cart-load of money?

Y. Ped. They have taught me the art of getting knowledge. Logic is in learning, what the compaſs is in navigation. It is the guide by which our reaſon ſteers in the purſuit of true philoſophy.

Sir Av. Did ever mortal man hear the like!—— Have I been at this expence to breed my ſon a philoſopher? I tremble at the name! it brings the thought of poverty into my mind. Why, do you think if your old philoſophers were alive, any one would ſpeak to them, any one wou'd pay their bills!-----Ah theſe univerſities are fit for nothing but to debauch the principles of young men; to poiſon their minds with romantic notions of knowledge and virtue: what could I expect, but that philoſophy ſhould teach you to crawl into a priſon; or poetry, to fly into one---Well, I'll ſhew you the world; where you will ſee that riches are the only titles to reſpect; and that learning is not the way to get riches. There are men who can draw for the ſum of a hundred thouſand pounds, who can hardly ſpell it.

Y. Ped. Sir, you were pleas'd to ſend for me to town in an impetuous manner. Two days have paſs'd ſince my arrival, I would therefore importune you to declare to me the reaſons of your meſſage.

Sir Av. That is my intention, and you will find by it how nicely I calculate. You know my loſſes in the South-ſea had ſunk my fortune to ſo low an ebb, that from having been offered, ay, and courted, to accept a wife of quality (my preſent lady) I fell ſo low to have my propoſals of marriage between you and the daughter of a certain citizen, rejected; tho' her fortune was not equal to that of my wife. For I muſt tell you, that a thouſand a-year is all you can expect from me, who might have left you ten.

Y. Ped. And is to me as deſirable a gift.

Sir Av. I am ſorry to hear you have no better principles. But I have hit on a way to double that ſum. In ſhort, I intend to marry you to your couſin Bellaria. I obſerved her the night of your arrival, at ſupper, look much at you, though you were then rough, and juſt off your journey: my brother ſent her hither to prevent her marrying a gentleman in the country of a ſmall fortune. Now, I'll take care you ſhall have ſufficient opportunities together: and I queſtion not but to compaſs the affair; by which I gain juſt ten thouſand pound clear, for her fortune is twenty.

Y. Ped. Sir, I deſire to deliver my reaſons opponent to this match; they are two: firſt, to the thing, matrimony. Secondly, to the perſon, who is my couſin-german.

Sir Av. Now, Sir, I deſire to deliver mine. I have but one, and that is very ſhort. If you refuſe, I'll diſinherit you.

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Sir, here's a gentleman who calls himſelf Wilding, at the door.

Sir Av. Shew him in. Son, you will conſider of what I have told you.

Y. Ped. Yes, I will conſider, but ſhall never find a reply to ſo ſubſtantial, prevalent, and convincing an argument.

S C E N E IV.

To them, Sir HARRY WILDING.

Sir Har. Is not your name, Sir, Sir Avarice Pedant?

Sir Av. At your ſervice, Sir.

Sir Har. Then, Sir, I am your very humble ſervant.

Sir Av. I don't know you, Sir.

Sir Har. Don't you, Sir! why then, 'tis probable, by reading this letter, you will know more than you do now.

Sir Av. [*reads.*]

"Dear BROTHER,

"The bearer is my very good friend, Sir Harry
"Wilding: he comes to town to introduce his eldeſt
"ſon to Bellaria. The young man, I'm told, has a
"great character for ſobriety, and I know his fortune
"equal to my demands. I fear her old lover will
"find her out, unleſs prevented by an immediate
"match. Get every thing ready as quick as poſſible;

" I will be in town ſoon; 'till when, be particularly
" civil to Sir Harry and his ſon. [*Aſide.* Ay with a pox to them!]

" Your humble ſervant,
" and affectionate brother,
" GEO. PEDANT."

[*To Sir* Harry.] Sir, your very humble ſervant. My brother here informs me of your propoſals; I preſume, Sir, I know your ſon.

Sir Har. I am ſurpriſed at that, Sir, for he has no acquaintance but with books. Alas, Sir, he ſtudies day and night!

Sir Av. May I aſk what he ſtudies, Sir?

Sir Har. Law, Sir; he has follow'd it ſo cloſe theſe ſix years, that he has hardly had time to write even to—me, (unleſs when he wants neceſſaries.) But I cannot convince you better than by one of his bills-- let me ſee--ay, here--here is is!--here's a bill,———I ſhall ſee the rogue a judge——This bill, Sir, is only for one quarter.

For law-books, 50 l.

Fifty pounds worth of law-books read in one quarter of a year——I ſhall ſee the rogue a judge.

Item, For paper, pens, ink, ſand, pencils, penknives, 10 l.

For fire and candles. 8 l.

You ſee, he reads all night.

Paid a woman to bruſh books, 1 l.

For places in Weſtminſter Hall, 5 l.

For coaches thither, at 4 s. per time, 12 l.

For night-gown, ſlippers, caps, phyſic———

Sir Av. Hold, hold, pray; it's enough in conſcience.

Sir Har. In ſhort, the whole bill amounts to two hundred and ſeventy-five pounds, for the neceſſaries of ſtudy only. I ſhall ſee the rogue a judge.

Sir Av. But (methinks) there is one article a little extraordinary: how comes it that your ſon pays four ſhillings for a coach to Weſtminſter, when four lawyers go thither for one?

Sir Har. Ay! why, that's a queſtion, now, that has been aſk'd me ſeveral times; heart! I believe you are all envious of my boy. If he pays four times as much, he carries four times as much law, and that, I think, is an anſwer.

Sir Av. I wonder, Sir Harry, a gentleman of your plentiful fortune ſhould breed your eldeſt ſon to the law.

Sir Har. Oh, Sir! I'll give you a very good reaſon for that——My father was a lawyer, and he got an eſtate. It was my misfortune to be bred a gentleman. My father kept me in the country till I was three and twenty, and my wife has kept me there ever ſince; for except when I brought my ſon to the Temple, and this preſent journey, I never was twenty miles from home.

Sir Av. It was your misfortune to be bred a gentleman, Sir Harry!

Sir Har. Ay, Sir; but I always reſolved to breed my ſon to the law; I determin'd it before he was born; and I don't queſtion but to ſee him a judge.—I am impatient till I find him out; ſo I am your humble ſervant. You may expect me at dinner.

Sir Av. That's kind, however.——You ſee, ſon, we have but a ſhort time to execute our project in; and if we are not expeditious, the ſtock will be ſold to another purchaſer. I am obliged to go into the city on buſineſs: after dinner I will introduce you to my niece. In the mean time, think on ſome fine ſpeeches, ſome high compliments: for in dealing with women (contrary to all other merchandize) the way to get them cheap, is to cry them up as much beyond their value as poſſible.

Y. Ped. So the matter is reduced to this, "Either to be married or diſinherited." I'll accept the prior; for, if I am diſinherited, I ſhall never get my eſtate again; if I am married, (providentially) I may get rid of my wife.

SCENE V. *St* JAMES's *Park.*

VALENTINE *and* VEROMIL.

Val. This was an agreeable ſurpriſe, indeed! for of all men, my Veromil is he whom I moſt wiſhed, but leaſt expected to meet.

Ver. My wiſhes, Valentine, were equal to yours, but my expectations greater; for I was told the town and all its pleaſures had long engroſſed the heart of my Valentine. Nor has my information been falſe, I find. Theſe cloaths! theſe looks! theſe airs! give me reaſon to wonder how I recollected my metamorphoſed friend.

Val. Why, faith! I am a little changed ſince thoſe happy times, when after a day ſpent in ſtudy, we us'd to regale at night, and communicate our diſcoveries in knowledge over a pint of bad port. While, poor creatures! we were ſtrangers to the greateſt, pleaſanteſt part of knowledge——

Ver. What?

Val. Woman, dear Charles, woman; a ſort of books prohibited at the univerſity, becauſe your grave Dons don't underſtand them. But what part of the world has poſſeſs'd you theſe years?

Ver. The firſt twelvemonth after I left the univerſity, I remained in the country with my father, (you had not then forgot to correſpond with me.) I then made the tour of France and Italy. I intended to viſit Germany; but, on my return to Paris, I there received the news of my father's death!

Val. 'Sdeath! he did not deſerve the name.—Nay, I am no ſtranger to your misfortunes. Sure, Nature was as blind when ſhe gave him ſuch a ſon, as Fortune, when ſhe robbed you of your birth-right.

Ver. Valentine, I charge thee, on thy friendſhip, not to reflect on that memory which ſhall be ever ſacred to my breaſt. Who knows what arts my brother may have uſed? Nay, I have reaſon to believe my actions abroad were miſrepreſented. I muſt have fallen by a double deceit. He muſt have colour'd my innocence with the face of vice, and cover'd his own notorious vices under the appearance of innocence.

Val. Hell in its own ſhape reward him for it.

Ver. Heaven forgive him. I hope I can.

Val. But tell me, (tho' I dread to aſk) he did not, could not, diſinherit you of all!

Ver. All in his power. My mother's fortune fell to me, he could not hinder it. And, oh! my friend! I could with that ſmall competency outvie my brother's happineſs, had I not, with my fortune, loſt a jewel dear to me as my ſoul—yet here I forget even that. To hold, to embrace ſo dear a friend, effaces every care.

Val. I ſtill have been your debtor: 'tis your ſuperior genius to oblige; my utmoſt efforts will be ſtill your due.

Ver. Let us then ſacrifice this day to mirth and joy.

Val. With all my heart.

Ver. Is not that Wilding juſt come into the Mall?

Val. I am ſure he is alter'd ſince you ſaw him. I wonder his dreſs, indeed, did not prevent your knowing him.

Ver. No; it is by his dreſs I do know him, for I ſaw him in the very ſame at Paris. He remembers me too, I perceive. Mr Wilding, your humble ſervant.

SCENE VI.

WILDING, VEROMIL, VALENTINE.

Wild. Ha! my dear Veromil, a thouſand welcomes to England. When left you that delicious place, Paris?

Ver. Soon after you left it.

Wild. I thought you intended for Vienna. But I am glad that we enjoy you ſo much ſooner. For I ſuppoſe you are now come to town for good?

Val. Nay, he ſhall not eſcape us again.

Ver. My inclinations would bid me ſpend my whole life with my Valentine: but neceſſity confines our happineſs to this day.

Val. This day!

Ver. To-morrow night I am to meet a friend at Dover, to embark for France. I am glad we met ſo ſoon; for every hour I am with you, tho' it ſeems a moment, is worth an age.

Wild. You are ſoon weary of your country, Mr Veromil, which you long'd to ſee ſo much when we were at Paris.

Ver. Misfortunes have made it diſagreeable.

Wild. Come, come, I ſee the bottom of this: there is a miſtreſs in the caſe.

Val. To France for a miſtreſs!

Wild. Ay, or what do all our fine gentlemen there?

Val. Learn to pleaſe an Engliſh one. It would be more rational in a Frenchman to come abroad for a dancing-maſter, than in an Engliſhman to go abroad for a miſtreſs.

Ver. However you'll allow a lover to be partial; you muſt excuſe me if I think France has now the fineſt woman in the univerſe. But to end your amazement, ſhe is our country-woman.

Wild. And has ſome deviliſh coquet led you a dance to Paris? Never ſtir after her; if ſhe does not return within ten weeks, I'll be bound to———fetch her.

Val. Who can this great uncelebrated beauty be?

Ver. Oh! Valentine! ſhe is one, whoſe charms would delude ſtoiciſm into love: the luſcious dreams of amorous boys ne'er rais'd ideas of ſo fine a form, nor man of ſenſe e'er wiſh'd a virtue in his miſtreſs's mind which ſhe has not. That modeſty! that ſweetneſs! that virtue!

Wild. Her name, her name?

Val. Her fortune, her fortune?

Ver. I know, gentlemen, you who have liv'd ſo much in the gay world, will be ſurprized to hear me talk ſo ſeriouſly on this affair. But be aſſured, my whole happineſs is in the breaſt of one woman.

Wild. I own myſelf ſurprized: but our friend here can hardly be ſo, for he is to-morrow to be happy with one woman.

Ver. How!

Val. Wilt thou never have done with it? A man can't appear in public, after it's known that he is to be married, but every one who wants a wife will rally him out of envy.

Wild. Ay,----and every one who has a wife, out of pity.

Val. 'Sdeath! I'll be married to-morrow, and away into the country the next morning.

Wild. Oh! the country is vaſtly pleaſant during the honey-moon; groves and mountains give one charming ideas in the ſpring of matrimony. I ſuppoſe we ſhall have you in town again in the winter; at leaſt, you'll be ſo obliging to ſend your wife up. A huſband would be as public-ſpirited a man, if he did not run away with his wife, as he who buys a fine picture and hangs it up in his houſe for the benefit of all comers. But robbing the public of a fine woman, is barbarous; and he who buries his wife, is as great a miſer as he who buries his gold.

Ver. The public may thank themſelves; for no man would do either, had not the world affixed ſhame to the ſounds of poverty and cuckoldom.

Val. You mention the name, as if there was ſomething frightful in it: one wou'd imagine you had liv'd in the firſt age and infancy of cuckoldom. Cuſtom alters every thing. A pair of horns (perhaps) once ſeem'd as odd an ornament for the head, as a perriwig: but now they are both equally in faſhion, and a man is no more ſtar'd at for the one than for the other.

Wild. Nay, I rather think cuckoldom is an honour. I wiſh every cuckold had a ſtatue before his door, erected at the public expence.

Val. Then the city of London would have as many ſtatues in it, as the city of Rome had.

Wild. The ladies are obliged to you for your opinion.

Val. I think ſo. What is yours, pray?

Wild. Mine! that the poets ought to be hanged for every compliment they have made them.

Ver. Hey-day!

Wild. For that they have not ſaid half enough in their favour ——Ah! Charles! there are women in the world —— [*Hugs* Veromil.

Ver Bravo! women!

Wild. Doſt thou think I confine my narrow thoughts to one woman? No, my heart is already in the poſſeſſion of five hundred, and there is enough for five hundred more.

Val. Why, thou haſt more women in thy heart, than the grand Turk has in his ſeraglio.

Wild. Ay, and if I have not finer women—— 'Sdeath! well recollected. Valentine, I muſt wait on one of your aunts to an auction this morning.

Ver. Nay, dear honeſt reprobate, let us dine together.

Wild. I am engaged at the ſame place.

Val. Veromil, if you pleaſe, I'll introduce you. Perhaps you will be entertained with as merry a mixture of characters as you have ſeen. There is (to give you a ſhort Dramatis Perſonæ) my worthy uncle, whoſe whole life and converſation runs on that one topick, gain. His ſon, whom I believe you remember at the univerſity, who is ſince, with much labour and without any genius, improved to be a learned blockhead.

Ver. I gueſs his perfections by the dawnings I obſerved in him. His learning adorns his genius, as the colouring of a great painter would the features of a bad one.

Wild. Or the colouring of ſome ladies do the wrinkles of their faces.

Val. Then I have two aunts as oppoſite in their inclinations, as two oppoſite points of the globe: and I believe as warm in them as the centre.

Wild. And point to the ſame centre too, or I'm miſtaken.

Val. Laſtly, two young ladies, one of whom is as romantically in love as yourſelf, and whom, perhaps, when you have ſeen, you will not allow the fineſt woman in the world to be in France.

Ver. I defy the danger. Beſides, I deſire we may have the afternoon to ourſelves. I declare againſt all cards and parties whatſoever.

Val. I'll ſecond your reſiſtance: for I know we ſhall be aſk'd; and they will be as difficultly refus'd too as a ſtarving author, who begs your ſubſcription to his next miſcellany; and you will get much the ſame by both compliances, a great deal of nonſenſe and impertinence for your money —— for he who plays at Quadrille without being let into the ſecret, as ſurely loſes, as he would at Newmarket.

Wild. Ay, but then he is let ſometimes into much more charming ſecrets.

Val. Faith! very rarely!—Many have ſucceeded by the contrary practice, which is the reaſon why ſharpers have been ſo often happy in their favours. Your ſucceſs would be more forwarded by winning five hundred, than by loſing five thouſand.

Wild. Why, faith! on a ſecond conſideration, I begin to be of your opinion.

For gratitude may to ſome women fall,
But money, powerful money, charms them all.

ACT II. SCENE I.

SCENE, WILDING's *chambers in the Temple.*

PINCET *alone.*

'TIS a fine thing to have a clear conſcience: but a clear purſe, and a loaded conſcience, is the devil. To have been a rogue, in order to be a gentleman, and then reduced to be a ſervant again!—— What, refuſe paying my annuity the ſecond half year, and bid diſcover if I dare! [*Shews a letter.*]—Diſcover if I dare! you ſhall repent that, my dear brother rogue: for ſince I can't live like a gentleman by my roguery, I'll e'en tell the truth, and ſtand in the pillory like one, by my honeſty. [*Knocking.*] So, the duns begin: well, I can truly ſay, my maſter is not at home now——but if he were, it would be the ſame thing. [*Knocking harder.*

SCENE II.

Sir HARRY WILDING, PINCET.

Pin. Hey-day! this is ſome ſcrivener, or dun of authority.

Sir Har. Here, you, ſirrah, where's your maſter?

Pin. I do not know, Sir.

Sir Har. What, is not he at home?

Pin. No, Sir.

Sir Har. And when do you expect him home?

Pin. I can't tell.

Sir Har. I warrant, gone to Weſtminſter——A diligent rogue—when did your maſter go out?

Pin. I don't know. (What ſtrange fellow is this?)

Sir Har. [*Aſide.*] I warrant before this raſcal was up.——Come, ſirrah, ſhow me your maſter's library.

Pin. His library, Sir?

Sir Har. His library, Sir, his ſtudy, his books.

Pin. My maſter has no books, Sir.

Sir Har. Show me his books, or I'll crack your ſkull for you, Sir.

Pin. Sir, he has no books. What would you have with my maſter, Sir?

Sir Har. What's this? [*Taking up a book.*] Rocheſter's poems? What does he do with poems?——but 'tis better to ſpend an hour ſo, than in a tavern. —What book is this!—Plays——what, does he read plays too?—Hark ye, ſirrah, ſhow me where your maſter keeps his law-books.

Pin. Sir, he has no law-books: what ſhould he do with law-books!

Sir Har. I'll tell you, villain!

[*Goes to ſtrike him. Knocking.*

O here he comes, I'll meet my dear boy.

SCENE III.

To them, TAYLOR.

Tayl. Mr Pincet, is your maſter within? I have brought my bill.

Pin. You muſt come another time.

Tayl. Another time! Sir, I muſt ſpeak with him now. I have been put off this twelve-month, I can ſtay no longer.

Sir Har. Give me your bill.

Tayl. Will you pay it, Sir?

Sir Har. Perhaps I will, Sir.

Tayl. Here it is, Sir.

Sir Har. Agad, it's a good long one. "For a ſuit "of laced cloaths made your honour laſt Michael-"mas was two years, forty pounds." What, do your Templars wear laced cloaths?

Tayl. Do they? ha, ha, ha, wou'd they paid for them too. We have gentlemen here, Sir, who dreſs as finely as any beaus of them all.

Pin. And pay as finely too, I believe, to your ſorrow. [*Aſide.*

Sir Har. "A ſuit of black velvet, twenty-three "pounds." Adad, the rogue is extravagant.

SCENE IV.

To them, MILLINER, PERRIWIGMAKER, SHOEMAKER, HOSIER.

Mill. Mr Pincet, is your maſter within?

Pin. No, no, no,——you muſt all come another time.

Per. Sir, we ſhall not come another time; we agreed to come all in a body; and unleſs we are paid, we ſhall take other methods. [*Knocking.*

Sir Har. Hell and the devil! what have we here?

[*Staring, as in the greateſt confuſion.*

Pin. [*without.*] He is not at home.

Trickſy. I tell you he is, and I will ſee him.

SCENE V.

To them, Mrs TRICKSY. *As ſhe is croſſing the ſtage,* Sir HARRY *takes hold on her.*

Sir Har. Hark ye, Madam, are you acquainted with my ſon?

Tric. Nor none of the ſcrubs that belong to you, fellow, I hope.

Sir Har. The gentleman who owns theſe chambers, Madam, is my ſon.

Tric. Sir, you are an impudent coxcomb; the gentleman who owns theſe chambers has no ſuch dirty relations.

Sir Har. Very fine, very fine, I ſee it now. My ſon is an extravagant rake, and I am impoſed upon. But I'll be revenged on theſe fop-makers at leaſt.

Per. Sir, I will have my money.

Sir Har. I'll pay you, Sir, with a vengeance.—— Dogs! villains! whores!

[*Beats them out, and returns.*

SCENE VI.

Sir HARRY *alone.*

A rogue, a rogue! is this his ſtudying law?—— Oh, here's his ſtrong-box, we'll ſee what's in thee however. [*Breaks it open.*]—What's this? [*Reads.*

" Dear BUNNY,
" I will meet you in the balcony at the Old Play-
" houſe this evening at ſix. Dumps is gone into the
" country. I chuſe rather to ſee you abroad than at
" my own houſe; for ſome things, lately happened,
" I fear, have given the cuckold reaſon for ſuſpicion.
" Nothing can equal my contempt for him, but my
" love for you.
" Yours, affectionately,
" J. G."

Oh, the devil, the devil!——Law!—ay, ay, he has ſtudied law with a vengeance. I ſhall have him ſuffer the law, inſtead of practiſing it. I'll demoliſh your fopperies for you, raſcal.—Dear Bunny. [*Looks on the letter.*] I ſhall ſee the rogue hanged.

SCENE VII. *An antichamber in Sir* AVARICE PEDANT's *Houſe*.

Lady LUCY, *Lady* GRAVELY, BELLARIA, CLARISSA.

L. Lucy. Ha, ha, ha!——And have you the aſſurance to own yourſelf in love, in an age, when 'tis as immodeſt to love before marriage, as 'tis unfaſhionable to love after it?

Bel. And when the merit of him I do love is much more a rarity than either. 'Tis only when we fix our affections unworthily, that they are blameable; but where virtue, ſenſe, reputation, worth, love and conſtancy meet in a man, the miſtreſs who is aſham'd of her paſſion muſt have a ſoul too mean to diſtinguiſh them.

L. Grave. What will the immodeſty of this age come to?

L. Lucy. What will the ſtupidity of it come to?

L. Grave. A young woman to declare openly ſhe loves a man!

L. Lucy. A young woman to declare openly ſhe loves one man only! your wit and beauty, Bellaria, were intended to enſlave mankind. Your eyes ſhould firſt conquer the world, and then weep, like Alexander's, for more worlds to conquer.

Bel. I rather think he ſhould have wept for thoſe he had conquered. He had no more title to ſacrifice the lives of men to his ambition, than a woman has their eaſe. And I aſſure you, Madam, had my eyes that power you ſpeak of, I would only defend my own by them, which is the only warrantable uſe of power in both ſexes.

L. Lucy. Well, for a woman, who has been ſo much of the world, you talk very ſtrangely.

L. Gra. It is to her town education, to her ſeeing the world; as you call it, that ſhe owes theſe immodeſt thoughts; had her father confin'd her in the country, as her uncle did, and as I adviſ'd him, ſhe would have ſcorn'd fellows as much as I do.

Bel. I hope, Madam, I ſhall never give any of my friends reaſon to regret my education.

L. Gra. Yes, Madam, I do regret it;——I am ſorry I have a relation who has no more virtue, than to love a man.

Bel. My father commanded me, Madam, to love him.

L. Gra. Yes, but your uncle has commanded you not.

Bel. It is not in my power to obey him, nor am I obliged to it. I defy you to ſay, I ever gave encouragement to any other; or to him, before I had my father's leave, his command. He introduced him to me, and bid me think of him as my huſband. I obey'd with difficulty, 'till I diſcovered ſuch worth, ſuch virtues in his ſoul, that the reception which I at firſt gave him out of duty, I afterwards gave him out of love. I plac'd the dear image in my heart; and you, or all the world, ſhall never tear it thence, or plant another's there.

L. Gra. Did you ever hear ſuch a wretch! I could almoſt cry to hear her.

L. Lucy. I can't help laughing at her; ha, ha, ha!

L. Gra. Madam! Madam! more gravity would become you.

L. Lucy. More gaiety would become you, dear niece.

Bel. I find, aunts, it's impoſſible to pleaſe you both, and I am afraid it will be difficult for me to pleaſe either; for indeed, Lady Gravely, I ſhall never come up to your gravity; nor I believe, Lady Lucy, to your gaiety.

L. Lucy. Dear creature! you will alter your opinion, when you have the liberty to go to plays and aſſemblies.

L. Gra. Plays! and aſſemblies! ſend her to church.

Bel. I dare venture to both—I ſhall never reach that ſublime way of thinking, which imputes dulneſs to that, or levity to this.—And if you will give me leave to be free, I think, Lady Gravely may go more to the one, and Lady Lucy ought to go more to the other.

SCENE

SCENE VIII.

To them, SERVANT.

Serv. Ladies, Mr Valentine, Mr Wilding, and another gentleman are below.

L. Lucy. Shew them up.

L. Gra. I'll not be ſeen.

L. Lucy. Nay, lady Gravely.

L. Gra. I don't like ſuch company——beſides, I have ſome buſineſs in my chamber.

SCENE IX.

VALENTINE, WILDING, VEROMIL, *Lady* LUCY, BELLARIA, CLARISSA.

Val. Ladies, your humble ſervant. I beg the honour of introducing a friend of mine——Lady Lucy, Mrs Bellaria. [*They ſalute.*

Bel. Oh, heav'ns! [*Aſide.*

L. Lucy. Was there much company in the Park?

Wild. All the world, but yourſelves; I wonder you could reſiſt the temptation of ſo fine a day, lady Lucy.

L. Lucy. Oh! never be ſurpriz'd at me, but when you ſee me walking; for I am the moſt lazy creature in the world. I would not have walk'd to my coach this morning, to have been empreſs of the univerſe. Oh! I adore the eaſtern way of travelling on men's ſhoulders: but walking is ſo vulgar an exerciſe, I wonder people of quality give into it.

Val. It has only the recommendation of being wholſome and innocent.

L. Lucy. Great recommendations truly, to ſome antiquated prude, ſome poor-ſpirited animal, who is proud of an innocent face.

Wild. That is, a face which never does the beholders any harm.

L. Lucy. Unleſs it frightens them—ha, ha, ha!

Wild. Some women are innocent from their want of beauty, as ſome men are from their want of courage.

L. Lucy. True. We ſhould all be tyrants, if we had power.

Wild. You will be too late for the auction, lady Lucy.

L. Lucy. The other lady has diſappointed us, ſo I ſhall not go. But I have bought a picture ſince I ſaw you, which if you don't admire, as much as I do, I ſhall not admire your judgment.

Wild. If I do not admire it, I'll ſay I do, and that's the ſame thing.

SCENE X.

VALENTINE, CLARISSA, VEROMIL, BELLARIA.

Val. You look very ill to-day, Clariſſa.

Cla. You were not obliged to tell me ſo, methinks.

Val. Freedom in a huſband, is ——

Cla. Impertinence —— ſtay till you have the title.

Val. A day will give it me.

Cla. Perhaps not. This troubleſome, impertinent freedom, makes me believe you not ſo near your happineſs.

Val. Madam! Madam! this turbulency of temper, makes me fear I am too near my miſery.

Cla. I don't underſtand you.

Val. I fear you are more difficult to be underſtood than I am.——Stay till I have a title!——He who marries a woman, or pays for an eſtate before he is apprized of their real value, will find it then too late to lament. The purchaſer, indeed, may ſell his eſtate to another, with loſs; but the huſband, like a loaded aſs, muſt drag on the heavy burthen, till death alone relieves him.

Cla. Intolerable inſolence!——I'll never ſee you more.

Val. Pardon me, Bellaria, I muſt follow her.—— To make the quarrel irreconcileable. [*Aſide.*

SCENE

SCENE XI.

VEROMIL, BELLARIA.

[VEROMIL *and* BELLARIA, *who had ſtood this while ſilent, ruſh into one another's arms.*]

Ver. My Bellaria!

Bel. Are you—can you be my Veromil?

Ver. Let this fond kiſs confirm me to be Veromil, and yours.

Bel. And this embrace, which pulls you to my heart, aſſure you, that I know I hold my Veromil: for none but him theſe arms ſhou'd e'er encircle.

Ver. My dear, my tender love!

Bel. Oh! tell me what ſtrange, what unexpected chance, has brought us once again together.

Ver. A chance ſo ſtrange, it ſeems the direction of a providence, which looks with propitious pleaſure on the ſincerity of our virtuous loves: for had not the accidental meeting with a friend prevented it, I had to-morrow gone for France, whither I falſely heard you was ſent.

Bel. Did you never receive any letter from me?

Ver. And did not my Bellaria then forget me!—Oh! how bleſt had I been to have ſeen a line from her!

Bel. Then I have been betrayed: for know, my Veromil, I was forced from my uncle's houſe in the middle of the night, and in two days brought hither: where I have been kept the cloſeſt priſoner: yet I found means to write to you, and gave the letter to my maid, with a ring from my finger to enforce her faithfulneſs; and ſhe has a thouſand times ſworn ſhe ſent it you.

Ver. O the falſe jade!

Bel. Heav'n knows what different agonies I have felt! ſometimes I thought you dead.—— Nay, once I fear'd you falſe.

Ver. Oh, my Paradiſe! no worlds could have tempted me; for, by this ſweeteſt, deareſt hand, I ſwear there's not an atom in that charming form, which I would change for worlds.

Bel. You know how willingly I believe you—— But hark! if we are overſeen, we are ruined.

Ver. Tell me——O tell me what I ſhall do.

Bel. I'll think of it.——Is Valentine your friend?

Ver. Moſt nearly.

Bel. Then conſult with him, if you believe it ſafe.

Ver. Oh Bellaria! } [*Looking fondly on one another.*

Bel. Farewel—my heart. }

Ver. Eternal tranſports, agonies of joy delight thy ſoul. Excellent, charming creature!——But ah! a ſudden damp chills all my riſing joys; for oh! what dragons muſt be overcome, before I gather that delicious fruit!——I muſt impart it to Valentine; for on his friendſhip hangs my ſure ſucceſs.

SCENE XII.

VALENTINE, VEROMIL.

Val. Alone, and muſing, dear Veromil! Are you thinking on your lady in France?

Ver. Valentine! are you my friend?

Val. If you doubt it, I am not.

Ver. It is in your power, perhaps, to grant me my utmoſt wiſh—will you?

Val. You know I will.

Ver. Be it whatever—

Val. Humph!—Faith! unleſs it ſhould be to go abroad with you to-morrow; for the ſame reaſon keeps me at home that ſends you away—a woman; and I believe, now you have ſeen her, you will confeſs a fine one.

Ver. What do you mean?

Val. In a word, that lady I left you alone with, I doat on to diſtraction.——You ſeem diſturb'd, Veromil! Did I not know you already engag'd, and the conſtancy of your temper, her charms might excuſe my ſuſpecting a ſudden conqueſt.

Ver. Be aſſur'd it is not in the power of wealth or beauty to change my paſſion.—And are you to be married to her to-morrow?

Val. Wou'd I were.—To ſhew you I diſtruſt not your friendſhip, I'll open my whole breaſt to you. I had for almoſt two years purſued that other lady, and after a long ſeries of importunity, at laſt obtain'd her conſent, and to-morrow was the appointed day. But about a month ſince, the lady whom I told you of in our way from the Park came hither; that I lik'd her you'll eaſily believe; but, by frequent converſation, the diſeaſe poſſeſs'd my whole mind. My love for her, and averſion for my former miſtreſs, increaſed daily——till I reſolved to break with the old, and purſue the new paſſion. The one I have accompliſh'd in an irreconcilable quarrel with Clariſſa: the firſt ſtep I will take to the latter, ſhall be by all means whatſoever to leſſen her value for him ſhe thinks herſelf engag'd to—whom, could I once remove, I eaſily ſhould ſupply his place.

Ver. But can you do this with honour?

Val. Ha, ha, ha! you and I had ſtrange notions of that word, when we us'd to read the moraliſts at Oxford; but our honour here is as different from that as our dreſs. In ſhort, it forbids us to receive injuries, but not to do them.

Ver. Fine honour truly!——Juſt the reverſe of Chriſtianity.

Val. Pſhaw!——thou art ſo unfaſhionably virtuous!

Ver. Virtue may indeed be unfaſhionable in this age; for ignorance and vice will always live together. And ſure the world is come to that height of folly and ignorance, poſterity may call this the Leaden age. But virtue loſes not its worth by being ſlighted by the world, more than the pearl, when the fooliſh cock prefer'd a barley-corn. Virtue is a diamond, which when the world deſpiſes, 'tis plain that knaves and fools have too much ſway therein.

Val. Ay, virtue and diamonds may be very like one another——but, faith! they are ſeldom the ornaments of the ſame perſon.

Ver. I am ſorry for it.

Val. Well, now tell me in what I can ſerve you?

Ver. I muſt firſt perſuade you into other thoughts: but I hear company. If you pleaſe, we'll walk in the garden.

SCENE XIII.

Lady GRAVELY, *following Sir* AVARICE.

L. Gra. I tell you it's in every one's mouth——the whole world ſays it.

Sir Av. Well, and what do I loſe by that? Would you have me part with my wife, becauſe the world is pleas'd to belie her? I'll as ſoon ſell out of the ſtocks the next report that is rais'd about Gibraltar.

L. Gra. Inſenſible wretch!

Sir Av. Inſenſible! you are miſtaken; I have computed it, and I find it cheaper to maintain my wife at home, than to allow her a ſeparate maintenance. She has great relations, and will conſequently have a great allowance.

L. Gra. Abandon'd! would you keep a ſerpent in your boſom.

Sir Av. If ſhe is a ſerpent, it's more than I know. If you can prove any thing againſt her, do it.

L. Gra. Will you proſecute it, if I do?

Sir Av. If her gallant be rich: but if he's poor, look you, I will have nothing to do with him; for I have reſolved never to go to law with a beggar or a lord: the one will never be caſt, and the other you will get nothing by caſting.

L. Gra. You'll get revenge.

Sir Av. I am too good a Chriſtian to give money for revenge.

L. Gra. But not to give up your conſcience for money. Will you ſet up for a Chriſtian without honeſty?

Sir Av. I'll have faith, at leaſt: and ſo, ſiſter, I believe my wife honeſt, and will believe it, till you prove the contrary.

L. Gra. Can a woman be honeſt who frequents aſſemblies, auctions, plays, and reads romances?

Sir Av. Very innocently, I dare ſwear.

L. Gra. Who keeps an aſſembly herſelf! whoſe houſe is a public rendezvous for idle young fellows! and who is, I am afraid, ſometimes alone with one fellow!

Sir Av. And very innocently, I dare aver.

La. Gra. How, innocently alone with a fellow! Brother, I would not be innocently alone with a fellow for the univerſe.

Sir Av. Since you enrage me, you yourſelf have a worſe character than my wife.

La. Gra. Monſter! I an ill character! I, who have lived reputably with two huſbands!

Sir Av. And buried them both with great ſatisfaction.

L. Gra. The world knows how decently I grieved for them both; yes, you ſee too well I have not worn off the loſs of the laſt to this day.

Sir Av. Nor will not, till you have got a third, which I heartily wiſh you had, that my houſe might be at eaſe, and that my poor wife, my poor Penelope, might not be diſturb'd. For I will no more believe any thing againſt her, than I will believe a ſtock-jobber on the Exchange, or a lawyer in Weſtminſter-hall.

L. Gra. The curſes of cuckoldom and credulity attend you, till thy horns put out thoſe eyes which cannot ſee them.

SCENE XIV.

WILDING *and Lady* GRAVELY.

Wild. So, now muſt I transform myſelf into a ſhape as foreign to my natural one, as ever Proteus did. [*Aſide.*]—Hem! hem!—Lady Gravely, your humble ſervant!

L. Gra. How got you admittance here, Sir? I thought you knew that I receive no viſits from men at this hour!

Wild. As my viſits, madam, are always innocent, I preſumed your ladyſhip might admit me at a time when you deny acceſs to the looſer of our ſex. I am, indeed, unfortunately, of that part of the ſpecies which your ladyſhip diſeſteems; but ſobriety, I know, recommends even a man to your ladyſhip's favour.

L. Gra. Sobriety! you have, indeed, a great title to ſobriety, Sir.

Wild. I own, indeed, the former part of my life has been too freely ſpent; but love has made me a convert. Love, which has made the ſober often gay, has made me ſober.

L. Gra. I am glad a good effect can proceed from a bad cauſe. Who can ſhe be who has wrought this miracle!

Wild. Wou'd I durſt tell you!

L. Gra. What do you fear?

Wild Your anger.

L. Gra. Tho' I diſapprove of love——if virtuous, I could forgive it.

Wild. Then 'tis yourſelf, yourſelf, madam; the object of my thoughts, my dreams, my wiſhes——

L. Gra. In love with me! I hope, Sir, my conduct has not given encouragement.

Wild. Oh! do not, do not look thus cruel on me. Thoſe eyes ſhou'd only dart thir lightnings on the profligate; but when approached with purity, ſhould be all gentle, mild, propitious. I, madam, deſpiſe and hate the world, as you. Coquets are my averſion.

L. Gra. That, indeed, ſhews your ſenſe.

Wild. Would but my fate ſo far bleſs me, that I might have the opportunity of converſing with a woman of your ſenſe, of communicating my cenſures on the world to you, and approving yours. Nothing can he harmful that paſſes between ſuch a pair. [*Kiſſing her hand.*] Let what will proceed from their amours.

L. Gra. Odious name!

Wild. Their virtuous hours. [*Kiſſing it harder.*] The world never lays any cenſure on their conduct.

L. Gra. The world is not half ſo cenſorous as it ought to be on the flirting part of the ſex—Really, I know very few who are not downright naughty.

Wild. Yes, and openly——it is ſix times the crime. The manner of doing ill, like the manner of doing well, is chiefly conſider'd—and then the perſons too.

L. Gra. The gigling, ogling, ſilly, vile creatures!

Wild. I don't know a woman, beſide yourſelf, one can converſe with.

L. Gra. Truly, I am at a loſs for converſation among my ſex.

Wild. Ah! Madam, might one who has the miſfortune to be a man——

L. Gra. Don't call it a misfortune, ſince the women are ſo bad.

Wild. Can I hope?

L. Gra. 'Tis to the men too we are obliged for knowing what women are; if they were ſecret, all women wou'd paſs for virtuous.

Wild. Yet I abhor want of ſecrecy. Had I been admitted to familiarities, I wou'd have ſooner died than diſcover'd them.

L. Gra. I cannot deny, indeed, but that ſecrecy is a manly virtue.

Wild. Oh! it is the characteriſtic of a man.

L. Gra. I am glad to ſee a young man of ſuch charming principles.

Wild. Oh, Madam!

L. Gra. Such a juſt and bad notion of the world.

Wild. Madam, Madam!

L. Gra. Such a thorough, thorough hatred of bad women,

Wild. Dear Madam!

L. Gra. And at the ſame time ſuch a perfect, tender, manly concern for the reputation of all women.

Wild. Oh! eternally careful, Madam.

L. Gra. And to ſhew you my approbation, I will venture to walk with you in the garden till dinner.—I will but ſpeak to a ſervant, and follow you. [*Exit.*

Wild. Soh! by what I can ſee, Lady Lucy, you are in a fair way to repent ſending me of this errand. Make diverſion for you: I ſhall make diverſion for myſelf, I believe; for nothing but the Devil can prevent my ſucceſs, and I'm ſure it's not his buſineſs to prevent it.

ACT III. SCENE I.

SCENE, *The Antichamber.*

Lady LUCY *and* WILDING.

Lady LUCY.

I HAVE been half dead with impatience to know your ſucceſs.

Wild. If ever I am ſent on ſuch an errand again—

L. Lucy. I'll engage ſhe gave it you home.

Wild. That ſhe did, indeed.

L. Lucy. And—and—Ha, ha, ha!—How did ſhe receive you?——Ha, ha, ha!

Wild. Why, I attacked her in a grave ſolemn ſtyle. I put on as hypocritical a countenance as a jeſuit at a confeſſion.

L. Lucy. And ſhe received you like a nun, I ſuppoſe.

Wild. Sir (ſays ſhe) while you frequent my ſiſter's aſſemblies, your affected ſobriety will gain no place in my belief. I receive no viſits from any man—— but from ſuch a gay, wild, looſe, raking, dancing, ſinging, fluttering—

L. Lucy. Coxcomb! Ha, ha, ha!

Wild. Would you recommend yourſelf to me, you muſt leave off your whole ſet of company, and particularly that wild, vain, thoughtleſs, flirting, unfix'd, inconſtant——

L. Lucy. Hold! hold!

Wild. Mimicking, ſinging, laughing——

L. Lucy. Whom do you mean?

Wild. She nam'd no body.

L. Lucy. No, ſhe did not need. I know whom ſhe ſcandaliz'd, and I'll tell her, be it only to make miſchief.

Wild. I ſay, ſhe nam'd no body at firſt; but when ſhe found I did not know the picture by her colours, ſhe writ your name at the bottom.

L. Lucy. My name!

Wild. 'Tis too true.

L. Lucy. The devil take you for telling me of it; it has diſcompos'd me ſo—I find it impoſſible to have any complexion to-day.

Wild. You need none, you have done miſchief enough already; 'tis time to think of repairing ſome of it.

L. Lucy. But I will not repair any miſchief I have done.

Wild. That's an affectation: you are better-natur'd.

L. Lucy. Indeed, I am as cruel as Caligula. I wiſh your whole ſex had but one pair of eyes, that I might kill them all with a frown

Wild. And one body, that you might recover them as eaſily.---Come, come, Lady Lucy, I have been your fool long enough, and have had no reward for my pains.

L. Lucy. No reward! Have I not ſpoke to you in all public places? Have I not read your odious letters? have I not ſung your more odious ſongs? have I not ſuffer'd you to gallant my fan, to kiſs my lap-dog? what can a reaſonable creature aſk, which I have not done?

Wild. The only thing a reaſonable creature would aſk. You have turn'd the tables on me finely, indeed, and made that my reward which I ſhould have pleaded as my merit. A prince wou'd be finely ſerv'd truly, who, when his ſoldiers aſked him for a reward, was to tell them, the honour of ſerving him was one.

L. Lucy. I can reckon fifty lovers of mine contented with leſs.

Wild. Rare lovers! A lady wou'd be as finely ſerv'd by ſuch lovers as a king by ſuch ſoldiers——fellows only fit to guard a drawing-room, or to court in it; and of no more uſe in the real fields of love or war, than an eunuch in a bed-chamber, or a parſon in a battle.

L. Lucy. I have taken a ſudden reſolution——

Wild. Have a care of a bad one!

L. Lucy. Never to ſee you more.

Wild. I thank you for telling me, however, becauſe it has led me into another reſolution.

L. Lucy. Impertinent!

Wild. Never to leave you more, till you have given me all the joys in your power.

L. Lucy. I hate you.

Wild. That's barbarous, when you know my love.

L. Lucy. Yes, I do know your love; and therefore I have us'd you like a ſpaniel, and will uſe you like a ſpaniel.

Wild. And I, like a ſpaniel, will but fawn the more, my angel. [*Takes her in his arms.*

S C E N E II.

To them, Sir AVARICE PEDANT.

Sir Av. Hoity toity! hey-dey! What's here to do? Have I caught you, gentlefolks? I begin to ſee I am rightly inform'd. Are theſe your innocent gaieties, madam?

S C E N E III.

To them, Sir HARRY WILDING.

Sir Har. Where is the dog? Sirrah! ſcoundrel! where are you? I ſhall ſee you hang'd, raſcal. I ſhall ſee you hang'd, ſirrah! I'll begin the executioner's work. I'll chaſtiſe you, ſirrah.

Wild. Humph!

Sir Av. Sir Harry, what's the matter?

Sir Har. The matter! Why, Sir, my boy, my lawyer, that I told you of, is ruin'd and undone.

Sir Av. How, pray?—[*Aſide.*] I'm glad to hear it, however.

Sir Har. How! why, he is a fop, a coxcomb, and I ſhall ſee him hang'd.—That's he, Sir, that's the lawyer.—I'll diſinherit you, dog.

Wild. Sir, I hope I have done nothing to deſerve ſuch a fate.

Sir Har. Nothing! is diſappointing my hopes nothing? is being a beau, when I thought you a lawyer,

yer, nothing?—I'll diſinherit you, ſirrah!—you are no ſon of mine——you have proved your mother a ſtrumpet, and me a cuckold.

Sir Av. Truly, ſo he has me too, I am afraid. [*Aſide.*

L. Lucy. Heaven ſend us ſafe off. [*Aſide.*

Sir Har. You muſt know, Sir, I came up to town to marry you to this gentleman's niece, a fine young lady with twenty thouſand pound——

L. Lucy. Ha! [*Aſide.*

Sir. Har. But you ſhall beg, or ſtarve, or ſteal, it is equal to me. Sir, I cannot but be in a paſſion; he has injur'd me in the tendereſt point.

Sir Av. So he has me, truly.

L. Lucy. And me, I am ſure.

Sir Av. In ſhort, I ſuſpect, Sir Harry, that he has been too free with my wife; and he who is too free with one's wife, may, ſome time or other, rob one's houſe.

Sir Har. Nay, perhaps, he has begun to rob already. It's probable I may ſee him hang'd before I go out of town.

L. Lucy. He has been too free, indeed! What did you ever ſee in me, Sir, or in my conduct, which cou'd give you an ill ſuſpicion of me?

Wild. So! I'm in a fine way, i'faith. [*Aſide.*

Sir Har. I ſhall ſee him hang'd.

Sir Av. He deſerves it truly.

L. Lucy. What could make you imagine that I was to be brib'd to ſo mean, baſe, low an action! what cou'd make you think I'd ever ſell my niece?

Sir Av.
Sir Har. } How!

L. Lucy. Sir Avarice, you are a ſtranger to the arts of this wicked young man: he has importuned me a thouſand times, ſince Bellaria's coming to town, to betray her to him; and juſt now he vow'd never to let me go, till I had promis'd.——Had you not come in, heav'n knows whether I ſhould have ever got away from him.

Wild. Can you blame the effects of love, Madam? You yourſelf ſee what a metamorphoſis it has cauſed in me.——I, who for ſix long years ſcarce ever liv'd out of a ſtudy, who knew no amuſement, no diverſion, but in books, no ſooner ſaw the charming maid than reading grew my bane; gaiety, dreſs, every thing that might charm the fair, has ſince employ'd my thoughts.

Sir Har. What do I hear!

Wild. My father here, who, from not knowing the cauſe of the transformation, has ſo ſeverely reſented it, can teſtify the truth of what I ſay.

Sir Har I ſhall ſee the rogue a judge!——That I can, my dear boy; and I will take care that thou ſhalt not be forc'd to bribe or beg any one: the girl ſhall be thy own.—Sir Avarice, I aſk your pardon; and, Madam, I aſk your pardon; and, Harry, I aſk your pardon.

Wild. Oh, Sir! you make me bluſh.——Dear witty creature! [*Aſide.*

Sir Av. You were not ſo good as your word at dinner, Sir Harry.

Sir Har. I was hunting after my boy here; but I will be glad to be recommended to the butler preſently.

Sir Av. At your own time.—Come, my dear; Sir Harry may have ſome privacies for his ſon: I have ſomething to impart to you too.

SCENE IV.

Sir HARRY WILDING, *Young* WILDING.

Sir Har. But hearke you, young man; what's become of all your law-books, hey?

Wild. Books, Sir? at my chambers, Sir.

Sir Har. Then they are inviſible. If I could but have ſeen as much of them as of my own in the country (I mean the outſides) I ſhould have been ſatisfied.——And pray, Sir, how came you by this letter?

Wild. Damnation! [*Aſide.*

Sir Har. Why don't you anſwer?

Wild That letter, Sir!

Sir Har. Yes, Sir, that letter, Sir.

Wild. That letter, Sir!

Sir Har. Yes, Sir.

Wild. I don't know what it is, Sir, I never read it.

Sir Har. You are too great a man to read your own letters, I ſuppoſe. You keep a ſecretary, I hope. I have paid off your ſecretary, I aſſure you. But I preſume—a—you can read it.——You are not a perfect beau, I hope.

Wild. What ſhall I do! I'm ruin'd and undone. [*Aſide.*

Sir Har. Or ſhall I read it for you? [*Reads it.*] I found this in your chamber, Sir; in your ſtrong-box. Your effects were all paper, Sir. Are not you a fine gentleman? Oh! Harry! Harry! that ever I ſhou'd find ſuch a letter as this, directed to——ha! to Capt Belvil.

Wild. 'Sdeath! how came I not to recollect that ſooner. [*Aſide.*]——To Capt Belvil!——I ſee the whole miſtake.

Sir Har. What miſtake!

Wild. You have been at another gentleman's chambers.

Sir Har. Sir, I was at thoſe chambers where I plac'd you.

Wild. Ah, Sir! there's the miſtake, I chang'd them about a fortnight ago: they were ſo noiſy, they diſcompos'd me in my ſtudy. I ſhould have ſent you word of it in my next letter

Sir Har. How!——I have committed a fine ſet of errors, I'm ſure.

Wild. What have you done, Sir?

Sir Har. Broke open a few locks, that's all——I may be hang'd myſelf now, before I go into the country.

Wild. Forbid it——you have a moſt litigious man to deal with.

Sir Har. I muſt make it up in the beſt manner I can. You muſt aſſiſt me with law. But come, we will loſe no time with our heireſs. Beſides, I long to ſee your chambers, and your books. I am reſolv'd I'll find ſome time this afternoon. I'll firſt obey a certain call that I find within me, and then waſh my face and hands, and get my wig powder'd, that I may be fit to wait on the young lady: ſo don't be out of the way.

Wild. This is a miraculous eſcape; or rather a ſhort reprieve; for how to carry on the deceit I don't know. I'll e'en go and adviſe with truſty Pincet; for I believe he is (as well as ſeveral of my brother Templar's ſervants) a better lawyer than his maſter.

SCENE V.

Sir AVARICE, *Lady* LUCY, BELLARIA, *Young* PEDANT.

Sir Av. Be not angry with me, Bellaria, I get nothing by this match; and when I get nothing by an affair, it is very hard I ſhou'd be blamed for it.

Bel. I know not whom to be angry with.

L. Lucy. Look-you, Bellaria, I am heartily ſorry for your misfortune; becauſe I know nothing ſo inconvenient, as being married to a very gay man. Mr Wilding may be a diverting lover, but he is not fit for a huſband

Bel. I cannot diſtinguiſh between thoſe names, Madam.

L. Lucy. Don't affect the prude, dear Bellaria.—You ſee yourſelf reduc'd to a neceſſity of marrying, and I know but one way in the world to avoid the match propoſed——and that too by Sir Avarice's leave.

Sir Av. Any thing in my power. I confeſs I do not approve of the young man.

L. Lucy. Then let us leave the lovers together. If you can agree, Bellaria, to prefer a ſober young man who loves you, to a wild fellow who values you no more than a thouſand others, you may eſcape what you ſo much dread.

Sir Av. Well, well, you ſee my exceſſive fondneſs, niece. I ſacrifice my reputation to your happineſs.

SCENE VI.

BELLARIA, *Young* PEDANT.

Bel. I am infinitely obliged to your concern for me——— [*A long ſilence here.*
So, couſin, you hear what my aunt ſays; you are in love with me, it ſeems.

Y. Ped. No, truly, I can't profeſs that I am. Matrimony is a ſubject I have very little revolved in my thoughts: but obedience to a parent is moſt undoubtedly due.

Bel. Obedience to a parent, couſin!

Y. Ped. Nay, nay, I ſhall not require any thing to be given which admits of a diſpute—or which, as Mr Locke very well obſerves, does not receive our aſſent as ſoon as the propoſition is known and underſtood. Let us introduce then this ſyllogiſm:

Whatever the law of Nature enjoins is indiſpenſibly juſt;
But the law of Nature enjoins obedience to a parent:
Ergo, Obedience to a parent is indiſpenſibly juſt.

Bel. Nay, but what have we to do with the law of Nature?

Y. Ped. O, if you require farther——the divine law confirms the law of Nature. I ſhall proceed to ſhew that it is approved by prophane writers alſo; tranſlating them as they occur, for your more immediate comprehenſion.

Bel. I'll leave you to your meditations.

SCENE VII.

Young PEDANT *alone.*

Y. Ped. Venus ſays to Æneas, in Virgil, "Fear "not the commands of a parent; nor refuſe to obey "her precepts."——What ſays Polynices to Jocaſta, in Euripides?—"Whatever you will, O my mother, "ſhall alſo be grateful to me."——The ſons of Metellus, as recorded by Alexander, are a great inſtance ——Plautus, in Sticho; "Whatever our parents

" command, we are obliged to perform." Why are Cleobis and Biton preferred by Solon, in Herodotus? why, for their piety to their mother. What an inſtance have we in the ſecond ſon of Artaxerxes——

SCENE VIII.

To him, VALENTINE, VEROMIL.

Val. So, couſin Pedant, what, arguing with yourſelf?

Ped. What, is ſhe gone?

Val. Who?

Ped. The lady: Bellaria, I think they call her. The women of this age are profoundly wicked! I was proving to her the neceſſity of obeying a parent, and ſhe wou'd not ſtay to hear it.

Val. Oh! you muſt not entertain ladies with thoſe ſubjects.

Ped. I ſhould rejoice egregiouſly not to be obliged to entertain them at all. I have a very hard fate, that I cannot be permitted to purſue my ſtudies, but muſt be ſummoned up hither to be married. I have money enough to buy books, and the neceſſaries of life; why ſhould I marry then? Becauſe my wife is rich?—Why, if it be granted that I have enough, the concluſion will be, that I do not want more.

Ver. Here's news for you, Valentine.

Val. The villainy of my uncle gives me more ſurprize, than I have apprehenſion from his ſon.

Ver. Surpriſed at villainy now-a-days! No, Valentine, be ſurpriſed when you ſee a man honeſt: when you find that man, whom gold will not transform into a knave, I will believe it poſſible you may find that ſtone which will change every thing into gold.

SCENE IX.

To them, WILDING.

Wild. Wiſh me joy, wiſh me joy, my friends!

Ver. We ſhould rather aſk the occaſion of your joy.

Wild. The uſual occaſion, marriage——I don't know but I may be married to-morrow——But, perhaps,

haps) you'll think, from what I ſaid to-day, I ſhould have rather begg'd your pity than your congratulation.

Ver. Your wife may (perhaps) want that moſt---But who is ſhe?

Wild. She is ——ſhe is ——Ha, ha, ha!

Val. One thou art aſham'd to name, I believe.

Wild. She is a very great friend of a friend of yours. She is even ——-Bellaria.

Val. Bellaria?

Ver. Confuſion! [*Aſide.*

Wild. My father is arriv'd on that purpoſe. The matter is agreed with the guardian in the country, who is himſelf coming to town. This haſte (it ſeems) is leſt ſhe ſhou'd be diſcover'd by a lover in the country. But you don't wiſh me joy, methinks.

Val. Becauſe I believe you won't have her.

Wild. Ha, ha, ha! If I have her not: if I don't win her, wed her, love her, and grow weary of her, in a month, may I be reduced to that laſt extremity, to live by the charity of ſuperannuated widows of the town, and either go to bed with an old woman, or without a ſupper.

Val. A very modeſt declaration! and may you thrive according to your merit. But I muſt leave you on ſome buſineſs——Vermoil.

SCENE X.

WILDING, *Young* PEDANT.

Wild. So cold! 'Sdeath! this fellow's in love with matrimony itſelf, and jealous of any other's ſharing in it.

Y. Ped. Sir, if I recollect your face, your name is Wilding.

Wild. Ha! Mr Pedant, your very humble ſervant.

Y. Ped. I hear, Sir, you are about to conſummate with a young lady here. I aſſure you, none will ſo ſenſibly rejoice in your fortune, as myſelf.

Wild. Dear Sir!

Y. Ped. For your preferment will be my deliverance, and the occaſion of reſtoring me to my ſtudies.

Wild. Oh! Sir!

Y. Ped. For books are, in my eyes, as much preferable to women, as the Greek language is to the French.

Wild. You ſay true——and women are as much more difficult to be underſtood.

Y. Ped. Ay, Sir; and when you have ſtudied them your whole life, you may juſtly ſay of them, what a certain philoſopher romanced of learning——"that "you know nothing at all."

Wild. It is, no doubt, a very great uneaſineſs to you, to be abſent from your books.

Y. Ped. Yet, Sir, do not imagine me totally abſent: I have the benefit of a friend's chambers in the Temple, one formerly my chum, now out of town, who has no very bad collection, and condeſcends to permit me the uſe of his rooms.

Wild. You juſt now told me, you rejoiced in my fortune.

Y. Ped. I remember.

Wild. It is then in your power to promote it infinitely, by lending me your chambers this afternoon.

Y. Ped. Sir, you may depend upon my doing——*quantum* in me, to ſerve you. How will they be inſtrumental?

Wild. If you will walk with me I'll tell you, for I hear company.

SCENE XI.

CLARISSA *follow'd by* BELLARIA, VALENTINE, *and* VEROMIL.

Clar. Nothing ſhall prevail with me—I deteſt his ſight; the appearance of ghoſts or fiends can bring no greater horror, nor more wou'd I avoid them.

Val. You ſee, Bellaria, how happy I ſhould have been in a wife.

Bel. This is only affectation; you muſt not part ſo. Follow her, Mr Valentine; ſhe can fly no farther than that chamber. Nay, I vow you ſhall.—The little quarrels of lovers are only throwing water on the flames, which quells them for a while, then makes them burn the brighter.

Val. But when you throw on too great a quantity, the flames may be extinguiſh'd.

Bel. Nay, this is barbarous; you muſt and ſhall follow her, and appeaſe her.

Val. Since you command, Madam—— It ſhall be my own fault, if this be not the laſt viſit. [*Aſide.*

SCENE XII.

VEROMIL, BELLARIA.

Ver. [*Looking on* Bellaria, *and ſpeaking as to himſelf.*] Can deceit take root on ſuch a ſoil?—No. I'll ſooner diſbelieve my friend—ſhe can't be falſe; Heaven never would have ſtampt its image on ſo baſe a coin. The eyes which have beheld that face, will never believe themſelves againſt her—ſo lively is innocence writ there—can falſhood then——

Bel. What means my love?

Ver. I know not what I mean.

Bel. Nam'd you not falſhood?

Ver. Ha! do you ſtart at that ſound? A guilty conſcience ſtarts when it is upbraided—the name of a crime has magic in it to the guilty ear.

Bel. I am confounded!

Ver. So am I, Bellaria!

Bel. Oh! tell me what it is that afflicts you. I will relieve your pain.

Ver. Have you the power then of that fabled ſpear, can you as eaſily cure as give a wound?

Bel. [*Smiling.*] If I have given you the wound, I will have the charity to cure it.

Ver. Your charity is extenſive, Madam; you wou'd do the ſame to more—to Valentine.----But oh! you cannot wound him as you have wounded me; his heart is better fortified; one of thoſe whom love may make a ſcar in for a while, which time will ſoon wear off. You have pierc'd my ſoul, Bellaria.

Bel. It never felt a pain like that torments me now: tell me, be generous, and tell me all your griefs.

Ver. What can they be? but that Bellaria's falſe; falſe with my friend; ſhe triumphs in her falſehood, and bids me make a confident of my happier rival.

Bel. Do I hear this and live!

Ver. Wonder rather that I have liv'd to tell it. Live! I do not; my life was wrapt in you, in you, my only love, whom youth or beauty, wit or wealth, could never chace away from my boſom; whom through a tedious three years abſence, amidſt the ſplendor of foreign courts, my conſtant breaſt ſtill cheriſh'd as its guardian angel; for whom I've ſigh'd, I've wept more than becomes a man to boaſt of.

Bel. I ſhall not boaſt what I have done for you; yet this; I would not have accuſed you without a cauſe.

Ver. A cauſe! demonſtration is one.

Bel. Demonſtration!

Ver. Ay, Madam; the words of ſuch a friend are little leſs: he told me, that you knew of his paſſion, and had not diſcourag'd it.

Bel. By all that's virtuous! by all the pow'rs of Heav'n, he wrong'd me.

Ver. Whom ſhall I believe?

Bel. Your friend---a woman's teſtimony bears no proportion with a man's.

Ver. By Heav'n, it ſhou'd not.

Bel. Still maintain the unjuſt ſuperiority; allow no virtue, no merit to us; make us as you do your ſlaves. Inconſtancy, which damns a woman, is no crime in man. The practis'd libertine, who ſeduces poor, unſkilful, thoughtleſs virgins, is applauded, while they muſt ſuffer endleſs infamy and ſhame. Well have ye reveng'd the ſin of Eve upon us; for man has ſince ſupplied the ſerpent's place, and ſcandalouſly lurks to cauſe our ruin: for what but ſuch an infernal ſpirit cou'd inſpire a villain to abuſe my innocence to you?

Ver. Cou'd he be ſuch a villain!

Bel. Do, believe him, ungrateful as thou art; but oh! remember this, you'll find too late how much you've wrong'd me, and curſe that credulous ear which ſeparates us for ever.

[*As ſhe is going, he catches hold of her.*

Ver. Oh, ſtay! [*Looking fondly at her.*] By heav'ns thou canſt not be falſe, *Bel.* Be not too ſure of any thing; I was too ſure you never could have thought me ſo.

Ver. Oh! did you know the torments of my mind, you'd pity not upbraid me.

Bel. Witneſs Heaven I do pity you; and while I am rack'd with torments of my own, I feel yours too.

Ver. Oh! thou art all angel: would I had had no ears, or he no tongue, or that I had loſt my own, ere I had ſaid ——I believe, I know thee innocent; thy mind is white as pureſt ſnow. But oh, that curſed ſuſpicion has blacken'd mine. I never ſhall forgive it to myſelf.

Bel. For my ſake eaſe the tempeſts of your mind. I'll never think on't more.

Ver. When I deſerve it, do. Surely thou art more than woman. How dearly mighteſt thou have revenged my unjuſt accuſation, by keeping me a few moments in the horror of having offended thee, or doubt of thy pardon!

Bel. Unkindly you think me capable of ſuch a behaviour. No, Veromil, I know the ſincerity of your love——and wou'd not give you an uneaſy hour, to gain more worlds than you deſerve.

Ver. Hear her, ye wanton fools, who ſacrifice your own and lovers happineſs to fantaſtic triumphs, and an ill judging world. O may'ſt thou be the pattern of thy ſex; till women, learning by thy bright example, wipe off the ſcandals which are thrown upon them. O let me preſs thee to my heart for ever.

Still ſearching out new beauties in thy mind,
A perfect woman, till I prove, deſign'd
By Heaven, its greateſt bleſſing on mankind.]

ACT IV. SCENE I.

SCENE *Continues*.

WILDING, PINCET.

WILDING.

YOU have your part perfect?

Pin. As my catechiſm, Sir; and I'll engage, that I act it to your ſatisfaction. If I am not revenged on thoſe blows of yours, old gentleman — if I don't make your heart bleed, may you fetch the laſt drop out of mine!

Wild. Fetch but the money out of his pocket——

Pin. That's my intention—the way to moſt men's hearts is through their pockets.

Wild. But do you think he will not diſcover you, when you are diſguis'd in the gown?

Pin. Oh, Sir! you need not fear that; a gown will hide a rogue at any time.

Wild. Away then; for ſhould the old gentleman ſee us together, we are ruined——My affairs in this houſe are in a very good ſituation. Here are four ladies in it, and I am in a fair way of being happy with three of them. Agad, I begin to wiſh myſelf fairly off with my two aunts; for I think a modeſt and reaſonable man can deſire no more than one woman out of a family. But I have gone too far to make an honourable retreat; for women act in love as heroes do in war: their paſſions are not preſently raiſed for the combat; but when once up, there is no getting off without fighting. Here comes one. Humph!

[*Stands with his arms acroſs.*

SCENE II.

Lady GRAVELY, WILDING.

L. Gra. Are you meditating, Mr Wilding?

Wild. Lady Gravely, I aſk a thouſand pardons.

L. Gra. Oh! you can't recommend yourſelf to me more; I love to ſee young men thoughtful. And really, young men now-a-days ſeem to he aſhamed to think.

Wild. They ought to be ſo! for the only excuſe to their actions, is a ſuppoſition that they do not.

L. Gra. That's very juſtly ſaid. I find you and I ſympathize in opinion.

Wild. Their dreſs, however, wou'd perſuade one otherwiſe: the care and art employed in that, ſeem the effect of thought——

L. Gra. In milliners and *valet-de-chambers.*

Wild. I wonder how they recommend themſelves to ſo many fine ladies.

L. Gra. You miſtake. There are half a dozen green-ſickneſs girls, who long for beaus and chalk, and thoſe things—but they are equally deſpis'd by knowing women. For my part, I think them pardonable no longer than a doll.

Wild. And of no more uſe. Like that too, they riſe in value, as they are richer dres'd.

L. Gra. They are my averſion.

Wild. That, I fear, our whole ſex is.

L. Gra. That's too generally ſpoken. I can't ſay all; I have found two exceptions already——and I don't know but I've ſeen a third.

Wild. Is it poſſible!

L. Gra. You can't gueſs how exceeſſively ſome things you have ſaid, have ſucceeded in my favour.

Wild. O my happineſs!

L. Wild. So much, that I ſhall do for you—what, I vow, I never did to any but my huſbands.

Wild. Soh! [*Aſide.*

L. Gra. Yet I fear I ſhall not prevail on you.

Wild. O my angel! I vow by this ſoft hand, I'll inſtantly obey.

L. Gra. Then I will give you my advice. Think no more of Bellaria.

Wild. Humph!

L. Gra. What can ſhe have to tempt you?

Wild. She is really handſome.

L. Gra. Her face, indeed, looks pretty well; but ſhe paints. Then for her ſhape; ſhe bolſters her ſtays. Then I'll tell you two particular deformities—ſhe has a rotten tooth in the left ſide of her upper jaw, and crooked legs.

Wild. Still, Madam, there is one pleaſure, which recompenſes all; my marrying your niece, will intitle me to your converſation.

L. Gra. So far from that—if you marry her, I'll never ſee you more.

Wild. What reaſon can you have?

L. Gra. A thouſand—the world might ſuſpect our familiarity; how muſt my reputation then ſuffer! O I would not for worlds even now be thought —— but now a thouſand excuſes might be made.—— There's no conſanguinity in the caſe; the naughtineſs of others; an agreeable young man! paſſion of love!

Wild. Oh! my ſaint!

[*He takes her by the hand, and, during the reſt of the ſcene, is hauling her to the door.*

L. Gra. Though I wou'd not now---yet if I did--- my reputation wou'd ſuffer in ſo ſmall a degree —— now-a days ſcarce at all---And if you were ſecret---

Wild. No torments ſhould extort it frum me.

L. Gra. I ſhould have only my own conſcience to ſatisfy.---And tho' no conſcience is more tender; yet, temptations allowed for---

Sir Har. [*without.*] Harry, Harry! where's Harry?

L. Gra. I faint, I die, I am undone! run, run into that chamber, and faſten the door on the inſide; c'll knock when you may come out.

SCENE III.

Sir HARRY WILDING, *Lady* GRAVELY.

Sir Har. Have you ſeen my ſon, Madam?

L. Gra. Not ſince dinner, Sir Harry.

Sir Har. What can be become of him! I have been beating about this half hour. I have unkennell'd a fox in leſs time,

L. Gra. Sir Harry, you may thank your ſtars that conducted you to me; for perhaps it is in my power to ſave your ſon from ruin.

Sir Har. How, Madam!

L. Gra. I fear he is about marrying a woman who will make him miſerable.

Sir Har. No, no, Madam, I have taken care to prepare ſuch a match as ſhall make him happy.

L. Gra. Perhaps you are miſtaken. I ſpeak againſt my relation; but honour obliges it. In ſhort, Sir Harry, my niece has not thoſe principles which can make a good wife.

Sir Har. I aſk your pardon, Madam, ſhe has twenty thouſand pounds——very good principles, I think.

L. Gra. She is a wild, flirting, giddy jilt.

Sir Har. Is that all?

L. Gra. I am afraid ſhe is no better than ſhe ſhou'd be.

Sir Har. I don't expect it.

L. Gra. Her reputation has a flaw——a flaw, as wide in it——

Sir Har. She has money enough to ſtop it up, Madam.

L. Gra. Wou'd you marry your ſon to a woman who has a flaw in her reputation!

Sir Har. If ſhe had as many as ſhe has pounds; and if I were to receive a pound for every flaw, the more ſhe had the better. [*Exit.*

L. Gra. What ſhall I do!——If he marries her, I loſe him for ever.—I am diſtracted.

SCENE IV.

Lady LUCY, *Lady* GRAVELY, *Young* PEDANT.

L. Lucy. You ſeem diſcompos'd, ſiſter; what's the matter?

L. Gra. I ſuppoſe you are in the plot too.

L. Lucy. What plot?

L. Gra. To ſell my niece; to give her up to a wild, raking, extravagant young fellow; to Wilding.

L. Lucy. Indeed, you wrong me. I came this moment to conſult with you how to prevent it. Not that I imagine Wilding what you call him, nor that

Bellaria would be unhappy with him; but I have another's happineſs in my view.

L. Gra. Diſtraction! ſhe's in love with him herſelf. [*Aſide.*

L. Lucy. Now, my dear, if you may be truſted with a ſecret.

L. Gra. Any ſecret is ſafe with me which is not contrary to virtue and honour.

L. Lucy. Nay, but I am afraid that you refine too much on thoſe words.

L. Gra. Refine, Madam! I believe to cenſure your conduct needs no refinement. I ſee very well what your drift is; I know what you wou'd ſay.

Y. Ped. Hold, aunt: that you can know what my mother is going to ſay is denied; for to know one's thoughts, before that knowledge is convey'd by words, implies a ſupernatural inſight into the mind. It will be proper, therefore, to prove you have that inſight, before any aſſent to your propoſition can be requir'd.

L. Gra. Fool! coxcomb! pedant! You ſhou'd be ſent to an academy to learn men, before you converſe with them; or elſe be confined to a tub, as one of your philoſophers were, 'till you had learnt enough to know you are a fool.

Y. Ped. Aunt, I wiſh a female relation of mine was ſhut up, 'till any one thought her wiſe, beſide herſelf.——Shut up in a tub! I agree, ſo that no woman trouble me. I had rather live in a tub by myſelf, than in a palace with a woman. You ſee, Madam, what an encouragement I have to marry.—What a taſk muſt I undertake, to marry a girl, when my aunt, who has had two huſbands, is not half tamed!——Get me ſuch a wife as Andromache was, and I'll marry; but for your fine ladies, as you term them, I wou'd as ſoon put on a laced coat; for they are both alike: your fine coat is only admired when new, no more is your fine lady: your fine coat is moſt commonly the property of a fool, ſo is your fine lady: your fine coat is to be bought, ſo is your fine lady. I deſpiſe them both to an exceſſive degree.

L. Lucy. Leave us, Sir, 'till you learn more manners.

Y. Ped. I obey willingly.

SCENE V.

Lady LUCY, *Lady* GRAVELY.

L. Lucy. A pedant is a moſt intolerable wretch:— I'm afraid ſhe'll never endure him?

L. Gra. Who endure him.

L. Lucy. That is my ſecret.—— Sir Avarice ſent for this wretch to town, in order to match him to Bellaria. I was afraid to truſt you with it, becauſe of your nice principles.

L. Gra. Indeed, I do not approve of any clandeſtine affair; but ſince it is the leſſer evil of the two, it is to be preferr'd; for nothing can equal the miſery of marrying a rake. Oh! the vaſt happineſs of a life of vapours with ſuch a huſband!

L. Lucy. I am a little in the vapours at this preſent; I wiſh, my dear, you wou'd give me a ſpoonful of your ratafia.

L. Gra. Was ever any thing ſo unfortunate! It is in the cloſet of my chamber, and I have loſt the key.

L. Lucy. One of mine will open it.

L. Gra. Beſides, now I think on't, I threw down the bottle yeſterday, and broke it.

L. Lucy. You have more, for I drank ſome this morning.

L. Gra. Did you ſo! then I aſſure you, you ſhall taſte no more this day; I'll have ſome regard for your health, if you have none.

L. Lucy. Nay, I will have one drop.

L. Gra. Indeed you ſha'nt.

L. Lucy. Indeed I will.

[*They ſtruggle. Lady* Lucy *gets to the door and puſhes it.*

SCENE

SCENE VI.

To them, WILDING, *from the cloſet.*

L. Lucy. If this be your ratafia, you may keep it all to yourſelf: the very ſight of it has cur'd me. Ha, ha, ha!

L. Gra. Sir, if I may expect truth from ſuch as you, confeſs by what art, and with what deſign, you convey'd yourſelf into my chamber.

L. Lucy. Confeſs, Sir, by what art did you open the door when the key was loſt?

L. Gra. I cannot ſuſpect a gentleman of a deſign to rob me.

L. Lucy. Only like a gentleman, of what you wou'd not be a bit the poorer for loſing.

L. Gra. Speak, Sir; how got you there? what was your deſign?

L. Lucy. He is dumb.

L. Gra. He is inventing a lie, I ſuppoſe.

L. Lucy. He is bringing forth truth, I believe: it comes ſo difficultly from him.

Wild. If I am not revenged on you, Madam!—— Look ye, ladies, ſince our deſign is prevented, I don't know why it ſhou'd be kept ſecret; ſo, Lady Lucy, you have my leave to tell it.

L. Lucy. I tell!

L. Gra. Oh! the creature! is ſhe in the plot? O virtue, virtue! whither art thou flown! O the monſtrous impiety of the age!

Wild. Nay, there was no ſuch impiety in the caſe neither: ſo tell, Lady Lucy.

L. Lucy. Surprizing!

L. Gra. Oh! the confidence of guilt!

Wild. Come, come, diſcover all: tell her ladyſhip the whole deſign of your putting me in her chamber. ——But you will own you have loſt the wager.

L. Lucy. Impudence beyond belief!

L. Gra. Tell me, Sir; I beſeech you, tell me.

Wild. Only a wager between Lady Lucy and me, whether your ladyſhip was afraid of ſprites. So Lady

Lucy conveyed me into your chamber; and if, upon my ſtalking out as frightful as poſſible, your ladyſhip ſhriek'd out, I was to loſe the wager.

L. Lucy. Prodigious.

L. Gra. No, no; it is for evil conſciences to fear; innocence will make me bold; but let me tell you, ſiſter, I do not like jeſting with ſerious things. So, you thought to frighten me, Sir: I am not to be frightened, I aſſure you.——

L. Lucy. By any thing in the ſhape of a man, I am confident. [*Aſide.*

Servant. [*entering.*] Lady Baſto, Madam, is at the door.

L. Gra. I am to go with her to Deard's. I forgive your frolick, ſiſter, and I hope you are convinced that I am not afraid of ſprites.

SCENE VII.

Lady LUCY, WILDING.

L. Lucy. Leave the room.

Wild. When you command with a ſmile I obey; but as a fine lady never frowns but in jeſt, what ſhe ſays then may be ſuppoſed to be ſpoken in jeſt too.

L. Lucy. This aſſurance is unſupportable; to belie me to my ſiſter; before my face too.

Wild. Hear this now! What way ſhall a man take to pleaſe a woman? Did you not deſire me to make love to her for your diverſion? Have I not done it? Am I not ſtriving to bring matters to an iſſue? Should I not have fruſtrated it all at once, if I had not come off ſome way or other? What other way cou'd I have come off? Have I not been labouring, ſweating, toiling for your diverſion? and do you baniſh me for it?

L. Lucy. Nay, if this be true——

Wild. Rip open my heart, that fountain of truth, and there you will ſee it with your own dear image.

L. Lucy. Well then, do one thing, and I forgive you.

Wild. Any thing.

L. Lucy. Refuſe my niece.

Wild. Any thing but that.

L. Lucy. You ſhall, you muſt.

Wild. To refuſe a fine lady, with twenty thouſand pounds, is neither in my will, nor in my power. It is againſt law, reaſon, juſtice.——In ſhort, it is a moſt execrable ſin, and I'll die a martyr to matrimony ere I conſent to it.

L. Lucy. And I'll die a thouſand times rather than you ſhall have her.

Wild. What reaſon can you have?

L. Lucy. Ill nature.

Wild. I ſee a better—you wou'd have me yourſelf. Lookee, Madam, I'll lay a fair wager I am at liberty again before you. You will never bury Sir Avarice; you are not half fond enough. Kindneſs is the ſureſt pill to an old huſband; the greateſt danger from a woman, or a ſerpent, is in their embraces.

L. Lucy. Indeed, you are miſtaken, wiſe Sir: I do not want to bury him; but if I did bury him, matrimony ſhou'd be the laſt folly I'd commit again, and you the laſt man in the world I'd think of for a huſband.

Wild. But the firſt for a lover, my angel.

L. Lucy. Keep off. Remember the ſerpent.

Wild. I'm reſolved to venture.

L. Lucy. I'll alarm the houſe: I'll raiſe the powers of Heaven and hell to my aſſiſtance.

Wild. And I,

" Claſpt in the folds of love will meet my doom,
" And act my joys, tho' thunder ſhook the room."

Sir Av. [*without.*] Oh! the villain, the rogue!

Wild. It thunders now, indeed.

Sir Av. Was ever ſuch a traitor heard of!

SCENE VIII.

To them, Sir AVARICE PEDANT.

L. Lucy. What's the matter, Sir Avarice?

Sir Av. Aſk me nothing: I am in ſuch a paſſion, I ſhall never come to myſelf again.

L. Lucy. That will break my heart, certainly.

Sir Av. We have harboured in our houſe a traitor, a thief, a villain.

L. Lucy. Whom, my dear?

Sir Av. The gentleman Valentine brought hither to-day, I have over heard making love to Bellaria.

Wild. Whom, Veromil?

L. Lucy. I am glad to hear it. [*Aſide.*

SCENE IX.

To them, VALENTINE.

Sir Av. Pack up your all, Sir, pack up your all, and be gone; you ſhall not bring a ſet of idle vagabonds to my houſe, I am reſolved.

Val. You ſurpriſe me, Sir! what vagabonds have I brought?

Sir Av. Why, good Sir, the gentleman you were ſo kind to introduce to me this day, I have diſcover'd addreſſing Bellaria.

Val. How, Sir!

Sir Av. I have overheard him, Sir, juſt now. So, if you pleaſe to go to him from me, and deſire him civilly to walk out of my houſe.

Val. Nay, Sir, —if it be ſo ——

Sir Av. And harkee, Sir, if you pleaſe to ſhew him the way, to conduct him yourſelf, you will prevent my uſing rougher means. Here, Sir, you harbour no longer.---I ſee him coming up the gallery; we'll leave you to deliver your meſſage. ——Hark you! cut his throat, and I will deal favourably with you in that affair: you know what I mean. [*Aſide.*

SCENE X.

VALENTINE, VEROMIL.

Val. If Veromil be a villain!

Ver. Valentine, I am glad to find you: I have been looking for you.

Val. I am ſorry Mr Veromil ſhould have acted in a manner to make our meeting uneaſy to either. I am forced to deliver you a meſſage from my uncle, leſs civil than I thought you cou'd have deſerved.

Ver. What's this, Valentine?

Val. The violation of our long and tender friendſhip ſhocks me ſo, I have hardly power to diſcloſe your crime, more——than that you know my love, and have baſely wronged it.

Ver. How, Sir!

Val. You have injur'd me——you know it.

Ver. Valentine, you have injur'd me, and do not know it: yet the injuſtice of the act you know. Yes, too well you know religion forbids an injury to a ſtranger.

Val. Preach not religion to me.——Oh! it well becomes the mouth of hypocriſy to thunder Goſpel tenets to the world, while there is no ſpark of honour in the ſoul.

Ver. You ſpeak the meaning of a libertine age; the heart that throws off the face of religion, wears but the maſk of honour.

Val. Rather, he that has not honour, wears but the maſk of piety. Canting ſits eaſy on the tongue that wou'd employ its rhetorick againſt a friend.

Ver. Your reflection on me is baſe and vain. You know I ſcorn the apprehenſion of doing a wrong.

Val. Ha!

Ver. Nay, 'tis true; true as that you did intend to wrong another; to rob him of his right, his love; and Heaven, in vengeance on the black deſign, ordained it to be your friend. Yes, Valentine, it was from me the beauteous, lovely Bellaria, was torn: her whom I ignorantly wou'd have purſued abroad; and 'tis to you I owe, that I am not robbed of her for ever.

Val. Curſe on the obligation! 'Tis to chance, not me: for had I known to whom I had diſcover'd her, thou hadſt ſtill been ignorant.——But thus I cancel it, and all our friendſhip, in a breath. Henceforward, I am thy foe.

Ver. Cou'd I as eaſily be thine, I ſhou'd deride and ſcorn thee, as I pity thee now. By Heav'ns! I ſhou'd diſclaim all friendſhip with a man who has falſely wrong'd my love.——You I can forgive.

Val. Forgive! I aſk it not. Do thy worſt.

[*Laying his hand on his ſword.*

Ver. Hero in ſin! wouldſt thou ſeal all in thy friend's blood? Art thou a man, and can thy paſſions ſo outſtrip thy reaſon, to ſend thee wading through falſehood, perjury, and murder, after a flying light which you can ne'er o'ertake!—–Think not I fear you as a rival. By Heav'n! 'tis friendſhip bids me argue with you, bids me caution you from a vain purſuit, whence the utmoſt you can hope is to make her you purſue as wretched as her you have forſaken.

Val. Hell! hell and confuſion!

Ver. You ſee ſhe meets my paſſion with an equal flame; and tho' a thouſand difficulties may delay our happineſs, they can't prevent it. Yours ſhe can never be; for all your hopes muſt lie in her affections, which you will never gain. No, Valentine, I know myſelf ſo fix'd, ſo rooted in that dear boſom, that art or force wou'd both prove ineffectual.

Val. I'm rack'd to death!

Ver. Reflect upon the impoſſibility of your ſucceſs. ——But grant the contrary; wou'd you ſacrifice our long, our tender friendſhip, to the faint, tranſitory pleaſures of a brutal appetite? for love, that is not mutual, is no more.

Val. Grant that I might not ſucceed. No paſſion of my ſoul cou'd counterpoiſe my love; nor reaſon's weaker efforts make a ſtand againſt it.

Ver. Think it impoſſible then.

Val. Thou knoweſt not the ſtrugglings of my breaſt; for Heaven never made ſo fine a form.

Ver. Can love, that's grounded on the outſide only, make ſo deep an impreſſion on your heart? Poſſeſſion ſoon wou'd quench thoſe ſudden flames. Beauty, my Valentine, as the flowery bloſſoms, ſoon fades; but the diviner excellencies of the mind, like the midicinal virtues of the plant, remain in it, when all thoſe charms are withered. Had not that beauteous ſhell ſo perfect an inhabitant, and were not our ſouls link'd, not join'd ſo faſt together, by Heav'n, I wou'd reſign her to my friend.

Val. O Veromil! Life, fortune, I cou'd eaſily abandon for thy friendſhip.—I will do more, and ſtrive to forget my miſtreſs.

Ver. Let me applaud thy virtue, and preſs thy noble boſom to my heart.

Val. It will be neceſſary for you to remove from hence. I will, if poſſible, find ſome means to effect your wiſhes. Within this hour you ſhall find me at the coffeehouſe.

Ver. Once more let me embrace thee.—The innocent, the perfect joy, that flows from the reflection of a virtuous deed, far ſurpaſſes all the trifling, momentary raptures that are obtained by guilt. To triumph o'er a conquer'd paſſion, is a pride well worthy of a man.

Safe o'er the main of life the veſſel rides,
When paſſion furls her ſails, and reaſon guides;
While ſhe who has that ſureſt rudder loſt,
'Midſt rocks and quickſands by the waves is toſt:
No certain road ſhe keeps, no port can find,
Toſs'd up and down by ev'ry wanton wind.

ACT V. SCENE I.

SCENE, Clariſſa's *Apartment.*

CLARISSA *alone, ariſing from a table with a letter in her hand.*

SO! the taſk is done: Heav'n knows how difficult a one; ſo entirely to ſubdue the ſtubbornneſs of my reſentment. What have I writ? I will ſee once more. [*Breaks open the letter.*

" If there be the leaſt ſpark of honour remaining
" in your breaſt, you will, you muſt be obliged to
" relent of your behaviour towards me. I am now
" too well aſſured of the reaſon of your late conduct,
" from Bellaria: but as it is impoſſible you ſhou'd
" ſucceed there, I hope"——I can read no farther——
" I hope you will reflect on thoſe vows you have ſo
" ſolemnly made to the unhappy
" Clariſſa."

I am reſolved not to ſend it.

[*Throws it down on the table.*

SCENE

S C E N E II.

To her, VALENTINE.

Cla. Ha! he's here, and comes to inſult me. Diſtraction!

Val. I fear, Madam, you are ſurpriſed at this ſudden renewal of my viſit.

Cla. I own, Sir, I expected your good-breeding, if not your good-nature, wou'd have forbidden you to continue your affronts to a woman——but if your making me uneaſy, wretched, miſerable, can do you any ſervice to Bellaria—Cruel! barbarous! how have I deſerved this uſage? If you can be cruel, perfidious, forſworn, forgetful of your honour—yet ſure to inſult me is beneath a man.

Val. If to relent,—if with a bleeding heart to own my crime, and with tears to aſk your pardon, be inſulting——

Cla. Ha!

Val. See, ſee my grief, and pity me. I cannot excuſe, nor dare I name my crime; but here will kneel till you forgive it.

Cla. Nay, ſince you repent, you ſhall not have a cauſe for kneeling long—Riſe, I forgive you.

Val. Sure, ſuch tranſcendent goodneſs never commanded a woman's heart before! it gives new ſtrength to my reviving paſſion; a love, which never more ſhall know decay. Let us this moment tye the joyful knot.

Cla. Never, never, Valentine. As a Chriſtian I forgive you; but as a lover will never regard you more. O, I have ſeen too lively an inſtance of your inconſtancy.

Val. Forbid it, Heav'n!

Cla. May it, indeed, forbid our marriage. No, Valentine, if ever more I hearken to your vows; if ever I once think of you as my huſband, may I——

Val. Swear not, I conjure you; for unleſs you make me happy in yourſelf, your pardon but augments my miſery.

Cla. 'Tis all in vain.——Were you to kneel, ſwear, threaten, I'd never grant it. If my forgiveneſs will content you, well; if not, you never ſhall have more. There is another more worthy of my love.

Val. Oh! name him.

Cla. Not till your vengeance ſhall come too late.

Val. This letter may unfold——

[*Takes the letter from the table.*

Cla. Oh! I am ruin'd.—Deliver it, raviſher.

Val. What do I ſee!—Is it poſſible?

Cla. It will do you little ſervice.

Val. Not to diſcover the man: but it has ſhewn me a woman in the livelieſt colours. This letter, Madam, is the production of no new amour. 'Tis too plain, you are falſe. Oh! how happy is this diſcovery. What a wretch ſhould I have been, with the caſt, forgotten, ſlighted miſtreſs of another. When I ſee you next, when I am that ſlave to aſk, to wiſh, to hope you for a wife, may I be curs'd with all the plagues that ever curs'd a huſband.—Adieu.

Cla. Oh! ſtay, and hear my innocence.

Val. 'Tis impoſſible.

Cla. You, you are the man, whoſe forgotten miſtreſs you have call'd me——I bluſh to ſay, 'twas you to whom that letter was intended. Nay, read, read the direction.

Val. Amazement!

Cla. Your genius is triumphant, and here my empire ends; for I muſt own, with bluſhing ſhame muſt own, that all my diſdain to you has ſtill been counterfeit. I had a ſecret growing love for you, even before you firſt intimated yours. But I am ſure the agonies I have this day felt, have ſeverely revenged all thoſe pangs my vanity has given you.—So here's my hand.

Val. Let my eternal gratitude demonſtrate with what raptures I receive it.

SCENE III.

To them, BELLARIA, *with an open letter.*

Bel. I am witneſs of the bargain. The farther ſealing it ſhall be performed at the finiſhing another.——I have

I have conſider'd your friend's propoſals [*Shews the letter.*] and approve them.

Val. I hope then, Madam, my diligence in their execution will prevail on you to forget——

Bel. I am ſure I ſhall have no reaſon to recollect—

Val. This goodneſs, Madam, at the ſame time that it pardons, pleads alſo an excuſe for my crime.——I ſhall do my utmoſt to merit it.

SCENE IV.

CLARISSA, BELLARIA.

Cla. I am afraid, my dear, my late conduct has appear'd very ſtrange to you, after what you have formerly ſeen.

Bel. Your former conduct was to me much more wonderful; for, to diſguiſe our paſſions, is, in my opinion, a harder taſk than to diſcover them. I have often laughed at the ridiculous cruelty of women; to torment ourſelves, to be revenged on an enemy, is abſurd; but to do it that we may give pain to a lover, is as monſtrous a folly as 'tis a barbarity.

Cla. You wou'd ſtrip beauty of all its power.

Bel. I wou'd ſtrip beauty of all its imperfections, and perſuade her whom Nature has adorn'd without, to employ her chief art to adorn herſelf within; for believe it, my dear Clariſſa, a pretty face, over affectation, pride, ill-nature, in a word, over coquetry, is but a gilt cover over a volume of nonſenſe, which will be deſpiſed by all wiſe men; and having been expos'd to ſale for a few years, in all the public auctions of the town, will be doom'd to ruſt neglected in the poſſeſſion of a coxcomb.

SCENE V.

To them, WILDING, *and Sir* HARRY *dreſs'd and powder'd.*

Sir Har. Madam, your moſt humble ſervant. I ſuppoſe, Madam, Sir Avarice has open'd the affair to you, which has brought me to town; it was ſettled before I left the country, as to the material points.

Nothing now remains but the ceremonies of the marriage, &c——So this viſit is to deſire to know what day you fix on for that purpoſe.

Bel. Your method of proceeding, Sir, ſomething ſurprizes me! Your ſon has never mentioned a word of that nature to me.

Sir Har. Alack-a-day, Madam; the boy is modeſt; Harry's modeſt, Madam: but, alas! you are the only perſon to whom he has not mention'd it: perhaps the rogue may think, as old Cowley ſays;

" I will not aſk her ——'tis a milder fate,
" To fall by her not loving, than her hate."

Bel. Very gallant, Sir Harry! By what I can ſee you give greater proofs of love than your ſon does.

Wild. I wiſh thoſe lovely eyes cou'd ſee as far into my heart, as they pierce: I ſhou'd not then be oblig'd to paint in the weak colourings of words, a paſſion no language can expreſs, becauſe none ever felt before.

Sir Har. To her, boy, to her.—I'll leave you together. Come, young lady, you muſt not ſpoil ſport.

SCENE VI.

WILDING, BELLARIA.

Wild. I am afraid, Madam, what you have heard me rally of matrimony, makes you ſuſpect my ill opinion of it: but that ſtate, which, with all other women, wou'd be hell to me, with you is paradiſe, is heaven. Oh! let me touch that tender hand, and preſſing it in raptures to my heart——

Bel. Ay, this is ſomething like love; by that time you have ſigh'd away two years in this manner, I may be perſuaded to admit you into the number of my admirers.

Wild. [*Aſide.*] I ſhall be admitted into Bedlam firſt, I hope.——'Tis that very thing makes ſo many couple unhappy; for you ladies will have all our love before-hand, and then you expect it all afterwards. Like a thoughtleſs heir, who ſpends his eſtate before he is in the poſſeſſion; with this difference—he antedates his pleaſures, you poſtpone them.

Bel. Finely argued! I proteſt, Mr Wilding, I did not think you had made ſuch a proficience in your ſtudies.——It wou'd be pity to take ſo promiſing a young man from the bar.——You may come to be a judge.

Wild. You only rally me; for I cannot think you believe that I ever ſtudied law: dreſs, and the ladies, have employed my time.—I proteſt to you, Madam, I know no more of the law than I do of the moon.

Bel. I thought you had been ſix years in the Temple

Wild. Ha, ha, ha! Madam, you may as well think I am a ſcholar, becauſe I have been at Oxford, as that I am a lawyer becauſe I have been at the Temple.

Bel So then you have deceived your father in the character of a lawyer; how ſhall I be ſure you will not me in that of a lover?

Wild Oh! a thouſand ways, Madam: firſt, by my countenance; then by the temptation; and laſtly, I hope you will think I talk like a lover. No one, I am ſure, ever heard me talk like a lawyer.

Bel. Indeed, you do now——very like one; for you talk for a fee.

Wild. Nay, Madam, that's ungenerous. How ſhall I aſſure you? If oaths will!—I ſwear——

Bel. No, no, no; I ſhall believe you ſwear like a lawyer too——that is, I ſhall not believe you at all. Or, if I was to allow your oaths came from a lover, it wou'd be much the ſame; for I think truth to be a thing in which lovers and lawyers agree.

Wild. Is there no way of convincing you?

Bel. Oh! yes. I will tell you how. You muſt flatter me egregiouſly; not only with more perfections than I have, but than ever any one had; for which you muſt ſubmit to very ill uſage. And when I have treated you like a tyrant over-night, you muſt, in a ſubmiſſive letter, aſk my pardon the next morning, for having offended me; tho' you had done nothing.

Wild. This is eaſy.

Bel. You muſt follow me to all public places, where I ſhall give an unlimited encouragement to the moſt notorious fools I can meet with, at which you are to ſeem very much concerned, but not dare to upbraid me with it——then, if, when I'm going out, you offer me your hand, I don't ſee you, but give it to one of the fools I mention——

Wild. This is nothing.

Bel. Then you are ſometimes to be honour'd with playing with me at Quadrille; where, to ſhew you my good nature, I will take as much of your money as I can poſſibly cheat you of. And when you have done all theſe, and twenty more ſuch trifling things, for one five years, I ſhall be convinc'd—that you are an aſs, and laugh at you five times more heartily than I do now. Ha, ha, ha!

SCENE VII.

WILDING *alone.*

Shall you ſo?——I may give you reaſon for another ſort of paſſion long before that time. I ſhall be maſter of the citadel with a much ſhorter ſiege, I believe.——She is a fine creature; but pox of her beauty, I ſhall ſurfeit on't in ſix days enjoyment. The twenty thouſand pound! there's the ſolid charm, that may laſt, with very good management, almoſt as many years.

SCENE VIII.

To him, Lady GRAVELY.

Your ladyſhip's moſt humble ſervant. You have not made a great many viſits.

L. Gra. No; the lady I went with has been laying out a great ſum of money; ſhe carried me as a ſort of appraiſer; for I am thought to have ſome judgment. But I believe Sir Harry is coming up ſtairs. I was deſired to give you this, by one who has an opinion of my ſecrecy and yours.

SCENE

SCENE IX.

WILDING, *ſolus; reads.*

"I hear, by Sir Harry, you have a great collection of books. You know my curioſity that way, "ſo ſend me the number of your chambers, and this "evening I will come and look over them."

What ſhall I do? If I diſappoint her, her reſentment may be of ill conſequence, and I muſt expect the moſt warm one. I do not care neither, at this criſis, to let her into the ſecret of my deceit on my father. Suppoſe I appoint her at young Pedant's—that muſt be the place. And ſince I can't wait on her myſelf, I'll provide her other company. I'll appoint Lady Lucy at the ſame time and place; ſo they will diſcover one another, and I ſhall be rid of them both, which I begin to wiſh: for ſince I have been propos'd a wife out of it, my ſtomach is turn'd againſt all the reſt of the family.

SCENE X.

PINCET, *as a counſellor, Servant.*

Serv. I believe, Sir, Sir Harry is in the houſe; if you pleaſe to walk this way, I'll bring you to him.

Pin. But ſtay; enquire if he has any company with him —— if ſo, you may let him know I am here, and would be glad to ſpeak with him.

Serv. Whom, Sir, ſhall I mention?

Pin. A counſellor at law, Sir.

Serv. Sir, I ſhall.

Pin. I am not much inclin'd to fear or ſuperſtition, or I ſhou'd think I this day ſaw the ghoſt of him I've injur'd. I cannot reſt with what I have done, nor know I well by what courſe to make a reparation.—But here comes my game.

SCENE

SCENE XI.

To him, Sir HARRY *and* WILDING.

Mr Wilding, your ſervant. I preſume this may be my client, the good Sir Harry.

Sir Har. Sir!

Pin. I believe, Sir Harry, I have not the honour of being known to you. My name is Ratſbane——counſellor Ratſbane, of the Inner Temple. I have had, Sir, according to the order of your ſon, a conference with Mr counſellor Starchum, who is for the plaintiff, and have come to a concluſion thereon.

Sir Har. Oh! have you?——I am your humble ſervant, dear Sir; and if it lies in my power to oblige you, in return—

Pin. Oh, dear Sir! No obligation! we only do our duty. Our caſe will be this:——firſt, a warrant will be iſſued: upon which, we are taken up; then we ſhall be indicted; after which we are convicted; (that no doubt we ſhall, on ſuch a ſtrength of proof) immediately ſentence is awarded againſt us, and then execution regularly follows.

Sir Har. Execution, Sir! what execution?

Wild. Oh, my unfortunate father!——Hanging, Sir.

Pin. Ay, ay, hanging, hanging is the regular courſe of law; and no way to be averted. But, as to our conveyance to the place of execution, that, I believe, we ſhall be favoured in. The Sheriff is to render us there; but whether in a coach or cart, I fancy a ſmall ſum may turn that ſcale.

Sir Har. Coach or cart! Hell and the Devil! why ſon, why Sir, is there no way left!

Pin. None. We ſhall be convicted of felony, and then hanging follows of courſe.

Wild. It's too true——ſo ſays Cook againſt Littleton.

Sir Har. But Sir, dear Sir, I am as innocent—

Pin. Sir, the law proceeds by evidence—my brother Starchum indeed offered, that upon a bond of five thouſand pounds he would make up the affair;

but

but I thought it much too extravagant a demand; and ſo I told him flatly—we wou'd be hang'd.

Sir Har. Then you told a damn'd lie; for if twice that ſum wou'd ſave us, we will not.

Pin. How, Sir! are you willing to give that money?

Sir Har. No, Sir, I am not willing: but I am much leſs willing to be hang'd.

Wild. But do you think, Mr Counſellor, you cou'd not prevail for four thouſand?

Pin. That truly we cannot reply to, till a conference be firſt had.

Sir Har. Ay, or for four hundred?

Pin. Four hundred!—why, it wou'd coſt you more the other way, if you were hang'd any thing decently. Look you, Sir, Mr Starchum is at the Crown and Rolls juſt by; if you pleaſe we will go thither, and I aſſure you to make the beſt bargain I can.

Wild. Be quick, Sir; here's Sir Avarice coming.

Sir Har. Come along—Oons! I wou'd not have him know it for the world.

SCENE XII.

VALENTINE, *Sir* AVARICE, *Young* PEDANT.

Val. Have but the patience to hear me, Sir. The gentleman I unwittingly brought hither, was the very man on whoſe account Bellaria was ſent to town.

Sir Av. How!

Val. Bellaria, imagining me his friend, in the higheſt rage of deſpair, when ſhe found her lover diſcover'd, laid open her whole breaſt to me, and begg'd my advice: I have promiſed to contrive an interview. Now, I will promiſe her, to convey her to Veromil, and bring her to a place where ſhe ſhall meet you and your ſon. When you have her there, and a parſon with you, if you do not finiſh the affair, it will be your own fault.

Sir Av. Hum! it has an appearance.

Val. But, Sir, I ſhall not do this, unleſs you deliver me up thoſe writings of mine in your hands which you unjuſtly detain.

Sir Av. Sir!

Val. And moreover, Sir, unleſs you do, I will fruſtrate your deſign for ever.

Sir Av. Very well, Sir; when ſhe is married.

Val. Sir, I will have no conditions. What I aſk is my own, and unleſs you grant it, I will publiſh your intentions to the world, ſooner than you can accompliſh them.

Sir Av, Well, well, I'll fetch them; ſtay you here and expect my return.

SCENE XIII.

VALENTINE, *Young* PEDANT.

Y. Ped. Couſin Valentine, have I offended you? have I injured you any way?

Val. No, dear couſin.

Y. Ped. Will you pleaſe, Sir, then to aſſign the reaſon why you do contrive my ruin, by eſpouſing me to this young woman.

Val. Are you unwilling?

Y. Ped. Alas! Sir, matrimony has ever appeared to me a ſea full of rocks and quickſands; it is Scylla, of whom Virgil,

"Delphinum caudas utero commiſſa luporum."

Or as Ovid,——"Gerens latrantibus inguina monſtris.",

Val. Well, then you may be comforted; for I aſſure you, ſo far from bringing you into this misfortune, I am taking meaſures to deliver you out of it.

SCENE XIV.

To them, Sir AVARICE.

Sir Av. Here, Sir, is a note which I believe will content you.

Val. How, Sir! theſe are not my writings.

Sir Av. No, Sir; but if your intentions are as you ſay, it is of equal value with them. I have there promiſ'd to pay you the ſum, which you ſay I have in my hands, on the marriage of my niece. Now, if you ſcruple accepting that condition, I ſhall ſcruple truſting her in your hands.

Val. [*having read it, and muſ'd.*] Well, Sir, to ſhew you my ſincerity, I do accept it; and you ſhall find I will not fail delivering the young lady at the appointed hour and place.

Sir Av. Let the hour be eight, and the place my ſon's chambers. I'll prepare matters that nobody ſhall prevent you. And hearkee, ſuppoſe you give her a doſe of opium in a diſh of chocolate; if ſhe were married half aſleep, you and I cou'd ſwear ſhe was awake, you know.

Y. Ped. I cannot aſſent to that. Suppoſe the *poſitum* be—
The woman is but half aſleep: will it follow,
Ergo, ſhe is awake?

Sir Av. The *poſitum* is twenty thouſand pounds; *ergo*, I will ſwear any thing.

Y. Ped. Oh dear! oh dear! was ever ſuch logic heard of? did Burgerſdicius ever hint at ſuch a method of reaſoning?

Sir Av. Burgerſdicius was an aſs, and ſo are you.

Val. Be not in a paſſion, Sir Avarice; our time is ſhort. I will go perform my part; pray, obſerve yours.

S C E N E XV.

Sir AVARICE PEDANT, *young* PEDANT.

Sir Av. Logic, indeed! can your logic teach you more than this? two and two make four: take ſix out of ſeven, and there remains one. The ſum given is twenty thouſand pounds; take nought out of twenty, and there remains a ſcore. If your great logician, your Ariſtotle, was alive, take nought out of his pocket, and there wou'd remain nought. A compleat notion of figures, is beyond all the Greek and Latin in the world. Learning is a fine thing indeed, in an age when of the few that have it, the greater part ſtarve. I remember when a ſet of ſtrange fellows us'd to meet at Will's coffee-houſe; but now it's another Change-Alley. Every man now who wou'd live, muſt be a ſtock-jobber.—Here is twenty thouſand pounds capital ſtock fallen into your hands, and wou'd you let it ſlip?

Y. Ped. But, Sir, is not injuſtice a——

Sir Av. Injuſtice! Hark-you, ſirrah! I have been guilty of five hundred pieces of injuſtice for a leſs ſum. I don't ſee why you ſhou'd reap the benefit of my labours, without joining your own.

SCENE XVI. *Young* PEDANT'*s Chambers.*

Lady GRAVELY, SERVANT.

L. Gra. Your maſter has not been at home yet?

Serv. No, Madam; but if you pleaſe to divert yourſelf with theſe books, I preſume he will not be long. (I dare not aſk her what maſter ſhe means, for fear of a miſtake: tho' as I am in no great doubt what her ladyſhip is, I ſuppoſe it to be my beau maſter.) [*Aſide.*

L. Gra. It is now paſt the time of our appointment; and a lover who retards the firſt, will be very backward indeed on the ſecond. His bringing me off yeſterday to my ſiſter, gave me no ill aſſurance of both his honour and his wit. I wiſh this delay wou'd not juſtify my ſuſpecting his love.——Hark, I hear him coming.

SCENE XVII.

Lady LUCY, *Lady* GRAVELY.

L. Gra. Ah!

L. Lncy. Siſter, your ſervant; your ſervant, ſiſter.

L. Gra. I am ſurpriz'd at meeting you here.

L. Lucy. Ha, ha, ha! I am a little ſurpriz'd too. Ha, ha!

L. Gra. I have ſcarce ſtrength enough to tell you how I came here. I was walking up from the Temple ſtairs to take a chair, (I'll never venture myſelf alone by water as long as I live), what ſhou'd I meet but a rude young Templar, who wou'd have forc'd me to a tavern: but by great fortune, another Templar meeting us, endeavoured to wreſt me from him; at which my raviſher let go my hand, to engage his adverſary. I no ſooner found myſelf at liberty, but ſeeing a door open, in I ran, ſo frighted I ſhall never recover it.

L. Lucy. You were a little unfortunate though, not to find the doctor at home.

L. Gra. What doctor?

L. Lucy. Ha, ha, ha! Doctor Wilding, my dear, a phyſician of great practice among the ladies——I preſume your ladyſhip uſes him.

L. Gra. I know no ſuch phyſician.

L. Lucy. But you know a gentleman of that name, I ſuppoſe.

L. Gra. Sure I am not in that wretch's chambers!

L. Lucy. Indeed you are.

L. Gra. It muſt be the devil, or my evil genius, that has laid this trap for me.—What can have brought you hither too?

L. Lucy. A chair, my dear.

L. Gra. By what accident?

L. Lucy. By my own orders.

L. Gra. How, ſiſter!

L. Lucy. Indeed, ſiſter, 'tis true.

L. Gra. And have you the confidence to own it to me? I deſire, Madam, you wou'd not make me privy to your intrigues: I ſhall not keep them ſecret, I aſſure you. She who conceals a crime, is in a manner acceſſary to it.

L. Lucy. I ſee your policy. You wou'd preſerve yourſelf, by ſacrificing me: but though a thief ſaves his life by ſacrificing his companion, he ſaves not his reputation. Your nice ſtory of a couple of Templars, will not be admitted by the court of ſcandal, at Lady Prude's tea-table.

L. Gra. Madam, madam, my brother ſhall know what a wife he has.

L. Lucy. Madam, madam, the world ſhall know what a ſiſter I have.

L. Gra. I diſclaim your kindred. You are no relation of mine.

L Lucy. You make me merry.

L. Gra. I may ſpoil your mirth: at leaſt I'll prevent it this time, I'm reſolved.

L. Lucy. That's more ill-natured than I'll ſhew myſelf to you—— ſo your ſervant. [*Exit.*

L. Gra. I'll take a hackney-coach and be at home before her——I ſee he's a villain; but I'll find a way to be revenged on them both.

L. Lucy [*Re-entering.*] O, for Heaven's ſake let us lay aſide all quarrels, and take care of both our reputations. Here's a whole coach-load coming up ſtairs. I hear them enquire for theſe chambers —— Here's a cloſet; in, in. I never was ſo frightened in my whole life.

SCENE XVIII.

VALENTINE, VEROMIL, BELLARIA, CLARISSA.

Ver. The clergyman outſtays his time, or the impatience of my love outflies it. I'm rack'd till the dear bond be tied beyond the power of art to undo. Think then, my ſweet, if the leaſt apprehenſion of loſing thee can ſhock my ſoul; what agonies muſt I have lived in when hope was as diſtant as fear is now!

Bel. Too eaſily, my Veromil, I gueſs; I know them by my own; for ſure I am not in debt one ſigh to love.

Ver. In debt! not all the ſervice of my life can pay thee for a tender thought of me. Oh! how I long for one ſoft hour to tell thee all I've undergone. For to look back upon a dreadful ſea which we've eſcaped, adds to the proſpect of the beauteous country we are to enjoy.

Servant [*entering.*] Gentlemen, a clergyman in the other room.

Ver. Come, my Bellaria, a few ſhort moments lead me into Paradiſe.

Val. Wou'd thou hadſt found another; but love forbids you this——You know I ſtrove with all my power againſt it; but it has conquer'd, and through my heart you only reach Bellaria.

Ver. Ha! nay then, wert thou as much my friend as thou art unworthy of the name—through twenty hearts like thine, I'd ruſh into her arms.

[*Fight. The women ſhriek. Lady* Lucy, *Lady* Gravely, *run out of the cloſet; they all hold* Valentine; *and as* Veromil *is leading off* Bellaria, *Sir* Harry Wilding, *and* Pincet *meet them at the door.*]

Then take my life ——and now my ſweeteſt———

SCENE XIX.

Sir HARRY WILDING, WILDING, PINCET, *Lady* LUCY, *Lady* GRAVELY, VALENTINE, VEROMIL, BELLARIA, *and* CLARISSA.

Val. Away. Stand off. Eternal furies ſeize you.

L. Lucy. You may rave, good Sir; but three women will be too hard for you, though you were as ſtout and as mad as Hercules.

Sir Har. Hey day! we had but one whore before, here's a ſeraglio.

Ver. Let me paſs, Sir.

Sir Har. No indeed, Sir. I muſt firſt know how you came here, and then, perhaps you ſhall paſs—— to the Round-houſe.

Ver. Then I'll force my way thus.

Wild. Nay I muſt ſecure my father.

[Veromil *makes at Sir* Harry, Wilding *interpoſes*--*he puſhes at* Wilding, *and is diſarmed*---*the ladies looſe* Valentine.]

Bel. Oh heav'ns! my Veromil, you are not wounded!

Ver. Through the heart, Bellaria, by this prevention.

Bel. Be eaſy then; for all the powers of hell ſhall never part us.

SCENE

SCENE XX.

To them, Sir AVARICE, *Young* PEDANT.

Sir Av. Hey! what have we here? my wife, and ſiſter, and Sir Harry, and all the world!

Sir Har. Death and the devil! what does this mean?

Sir Av. Nay good people! how came you all here?

Sir Har. Ay, how came you all here? for I will know before any one go out——

Pin. Sir, I beg to be excus'd— [*Offering to go.*

Sir Har. Not a ſtep: I ſhall have buſineſs for you. I'll ſee by what law theſe people make a public rendezvous of my ſon's chambers.

Sir Av. Your ſon's chambers, Sir Harry?

Y. Ped. That they were his, *datur*—that they are his, *negatur*—for the time that they were lent for is expir'd—*ergo*, they were his, but are not.

L. Lucy. } What's this!
L. Gra. }

Sir Har. Were his, but are not!——What, have you ſold theſe too, Harry?

Wild. 'Twill out.

Sir Har. Speak, Sir; why don't you ſpeak? are not theſe your chambers?

Wild. No, Sir.

Sir Av. His!

L. Lucy. His, indeed!

L. Gra. What do you think, Sir Harry, I ſhou'd do in your ſon's chambers?

L. Lucy. Or what do you ſee here like the apartment of a beau?——but I aſk pardon: your ſon is a lawyer.

Omnes. A lawyer! Ha, ha, ha!

L. Gra. In ſhort, Sir Harry, your ſon is as great a rake as any in town.

Y. Ped. And as ignorant as any at the univerſity.

L. Lucy. Ay, or as one half of his brother Templars.

Sir Av. And as great a rogue, I'm afraid, as the other half.

Sir Har. He ſhall be as great a beggar then as thoſe that are honeſt.

Wild. That, Sir, an honeſt captain of my acquaintance will prevent; for as they were my locks that were broke open, he has given up thoſe articles you were pleaſed to enter into, to me and my uſe. For which I am to thank the honeſt counſellor Ratſbane; into whoſe poſſeſſion you have given a bond of annuity of five hundred pounds a year.

Sir Har. Cheated! abus'd dog! villain—— ha! I'll ſee whether I am able to recover it——

[*Searches* Pincet's *pockets, throws out ſeveral papers, and pulls his wig off.*

Wild. It's beyond your ſearch, I aſſure you.

Pin. Help! murder

Ver. Nay, Sir Harry!

Sir Har. Dog, raſcal!—I'll be reveng'd on you all——

SCENE XXI.

Sir AVARICE, *Young* PEDANT, *Lady* LUCY, *Lady* GRAVELY, WILDING, VERMIL, VALENTINE, BELLARIA, CLARISSA, *and* PINCET.

Ver. [*taking up a letter.*] Here's one of your papers, Sir—[*ſtarts.*] Gilbert, my father's ſervant!—[*looking on the letter.*] By heav'ns! my brother's hand too—— then my curioſity is pardonable. [*Reads it.*

Pin. Heaven I ſee is juſt.

Ver. Prodigious! ——Gentlemen, I beg that man may be ſecur'd.

Wild. He is my ſervant, Sir.

Ver. He formerly was my father's—— This letter here, which is from my brother to him, will inform you farther.

" GILBERT,

" I received yours, and ſhou'd have paid you your
" half year's annuity long ſince, but I have had ur-
" gent occaſions for my money.—You ſay, it is hard
" to be reduced to your primitive degree, when you
" have ventur'd your ſoul to raiſe yourſelf to a high-
" er; and a little after have the impudence to threat-
" en to diſcover -- diſcover if you dare-- -you will
" then find you have ventur'd your body too; and
" that perjury will entitle you to the ſame reward,
" as you audaciouſly ſay forgery will me. — Expect
" to hear no more from me. You may diſcover, if
" you pleaſe, but you ſhall find I will not ſpare that
" money which your roguery has aſſiſted me in get-
" ting, to have the life of him who is the cauſe of
" my loſing it. J. VEROMIL."

Pin. If there yet want a ſtronger confirmation— I, Sir, the wretch whom the hopes of riches have betray'd to be a villain, will openly atteſt the diſcovery, and by a ſecond appearance in a public court, reſtore the lawful heir what my firſt coming there has robbed him of.

Bel. Is this poſſible?

Ver. Yes, my ſweet——I am now again that Veromil, to whom you firſt were promis'd, and from whoſe breaſt nothing can tear you more. Sir Avarice, you may be at eaſe; for it is now in my power to offer up a better fortune to this lady's merit, than any of her pretenders.

Bel. No fortune can ever add to my love for you, nor loſs diminiſh it.

Sir Av. What is the meaning of this?

Ver. That fortune, Sir, which recommended me to this lady's father, and which by forgery and perjury I was depriv'd of, my happy ſtars now promiſe to reſtore me.

Pin. You need not doubt your ſucceſs. The other evidence to the deed has been touched with the ſame ſcruples of conſcience, and will be very ready on an aſſur'd pardon to recant.

Wild. Dear Veromil, let me embrace thee. I am heartily glad I have been inſtrumental in the procuring your happineſs; and tho' it is with my miſtreſs, I wiſh you joy ſincerely.

Ver. Wilding, I thank you; and, in return, I wiſh you may be reſtor'd into your father's favour.

Wild. I make peace with ſword in hand, and queſtion not but to bring the old gentleman to reaſon.

Bel. There yet remains a quarrel in the company, which I would reconcile.——Clariſſa, I think I read forgiveneſs in your face; and I am ſure penitence is very plain in Valentine's.

Val. I am too much a criminal to hope for pardon. Yet, if my fault may be atoned for, I will employ my utmoſt care to do it. Cou'd I think the acquiſition of fortune any recommendation, Sir Avarice has oblig'd himſelf to pay me ſeven thouſand pounds on this lady's marriage.

Sir Av. The conditions are not fulfill'd, Sir, and—

Val. Not till ſhe is married, Sir. As you have not been pleaſed to mention to whom, Veromil will fill the place as well as any other.

Sir Av. Sir!

Val. Sir, what you have agreed to give is but my own; your conditions of delivering it are as ſcandalous as your retaining it: ſo you may make a buſtle, and loſe as much reputation as you pleaſe; but the money you will be obliged to pay.

Sir Av. And pray, Sir, why did you invite all this company hither?

Val. How ſome of it came here, I know no more than you do.

L. Gra. I can only account for myſelf and ſiſter.

L. Lucy. Ay, my ſiſter and I came together.

Wild. Mine is a long ſtory: but I will divert you all with it ſome other time.

Pin. May I then hope your pardon?

Ver. Deſerve it, and I will try to get his Majeſty's for you, which will do you moſt ſervice.

SCENE, *the laſt.*

To them, a SERVANT.

Serv. An't pleaſe your honour, your honour's brother, Mr Pedant, is juſt come to town, and is at home now with Sir Harry Wilding.

Sir Av. Then all my hopes are fruſtrated. Get chairs to the door.

Ver. This is lucky news indeed! and may be ſo for you too, Wilding: for Sir Harry is too good-humour'd a man to be an exception to the univerſal ſatisfaction of a company. I hope this lady will prevent the uneaſineſs of another. [*To* Clariſſa.

Val. This generoſity ſtabs me to the ſoul—— Oh! my Veromil! my friend! let this embrace teſtify my repentance.

Ver. And bury what is paſt.

Val. Generous, noble ſoul!

Ver. Madam, give me leave to join your hands.

Bel. Nay, ſince I have been the unfortunate cauſe of ſeparating them, I muſt aſſiſt.

Cla. I know not whether the world will pardon my forgiving you——but——

Val. Oh! ſay no more, leſt I am loſt in too exceſſive joy.

L. Lucy. Indeed I think ſhe need not.

L. Gra. [*To* Wild.] Your excuſes to me are vain. We have both diſcovered you to be a villain. I have ſeen the aſſignation you made my ſiſter, and ſhe has ſeen mine; ſo you may be aſſured we will neither of us ſpeak to you more.

Wild. I hope to give you ſubſtantial reaſons for my conduct; at leaſt my ſecrecy you may be aſſured of.

Sir Av. Come, gentlemen and ladies, we will now adjourn, if you pleaſe, to my houſe; where, Sir, [*to* Ver.] if my brother and you agree (as certainly you will, if you prove you title to your father's eſtate) I have nothing to ſay againſt your match.

Y. Ped. Nor againſt my returning to the univerſity, I hope?

Ver. Sir Avarice, I wait on you; and before the concluſion of this evening, I hope you will not have a diſcontented mind in your houſe. Come, my dear Bellaria; after ſo many tempeſts, our fortune once more puts on a ſerene aſpect; once more we have that happineſs in view, which crowns the ſucceſs of virtue, conſtancy and love.

All love, as folly, libertines diſclaim;
And children call their folly by its name.
Thoſe joys which from its pureſt fountains flow,
No boy, no fool, no libertine can know;
Heav'n meant ſo bleſt, ſo exquiſite a fate,
But to reward the virtuous and the great.

EPILOGUE.

Written by a Friend, and ſpoken by Mrs Giffard.

CRITICS, no doubt, you think I come to pray
Your pardon, for this fooliſh, virtuous play.
As papiſts by a ſaint; ſo authors practiſe,
To get their crimes aton'd for by an actreſs.
Our author too wou'd fain have brought me to it;
But faith! I come to beg you'd damn the poet.
What did the dullard mean by ſtopping ſhort,
And bringing in a huſband to ſpoil ſport?
No ſooner am I in my lover's arms,
But——pop——my huſband all our joys alarms!
—— Madam, to ſave your virtue, cries Sir Bard,
I was oblig'd——To ſave my virtue!—Lard!
A woman is her own ſufficient guard.
For, ſpite of all the ſtrength which men rely in,
We very rarely fall——without complying.
Some modern bards, to pleaſe you better ſkill'd,
Had, without ſcruple, the whole thing fulfill'd;
Had ſent us off together, and left you in
A ſad ſuſpence, to gueſs what we were doing;
Then fans had hid the virtuous ladies faces,
And cuckolds hats had ſhelter'd their grimaces.
But ours, forſooth, will argue that the ſtage
Was meant t' improve, and not debauch the age.
Pſhaw! to improve!——the ſtage was firſt deſign'd,
Such as they are to repreſent mankind.
And ſince a poet ought to copy nature,
A cuckold, ſure, were not ſo ſtrange a creature.
Well, though our poet's very modeſt muſe
Cou'd, to my wiſh, ſo ſmall a thing refuſe,
Critics, to damn him, ſure, will be ſo civil;
That's ne'er refus'd by critics—or the devil.
But ſhou'd we both act parts ſo very ſtrange,
And, though I aſk, ſhou'd you refuſe revenge;
Oh! may this curſe alone attend your lives!
May ye have all Bellaria's to your wives!

Sung

Sung by Miſs THORNOWETS, in the Second Act.

I.

LIKE the whig and the tory,
Are prude and coquette;
From love they ſeek glory,
As thoſe do from ſtate.
No prude or coquette
My vows ſhall attend,
No tory I'll get,
Nor whig for a friend.

II.

The man who by reaſon
His life doth ſupport,
Ne'er riſes to treaſon,
Ne'er ſinks to a court,
By virtue, nor party,
Does actions commend;
My ſoul ſhall be hearty
Towards ſuch a friend.

III.

The woman who prizes
No fool's empty praiſe;
Who cenſure deſpiſes,
Yet virtue obeys;
With innocence airy,
With gaiety wiſe,
In every thing wary,
In nothing preciſe:

IV.

When truth ſhe diſcovers,
She ceaſes diſdain;
Nor hunts after lovers,
To give only pain.
So lovely a creature
To worlds I'd prefer;
Of bountiful Nature
Aſk nothing but her.

Sung in the Third Act, by the ſame Perſon.

I.

VAIN, Belinda, are your wiles,
Vain are all your artful ſmiles,
While, like a bully, you invite,
And then decline th' approaching fight.

II.

Various are the little arts,
Which you uſe to conquer hearts;
By empty threats he wou'd affright,
And you, by empty hopes delight.

III.

Cowards may by him be brav'd;
Fops may be by you enſlav'd;
Men wou'd he vanquiſh, or you bind,
He muſt be brave, and you be kind.

THE

AUTHOR's FARCE;

WITH A

PUPPET-SHOW,

CALL'D THE

PLEASURES of the TOWN.

Firſt acted at the Hay-Market in 1729, and revived ſome years after at Drury-Lane, when it was reviſed and greatly alter'd by the AUTHOR, as now printed.

> ——Quis iniquæ
> Tam patiens urbis, tam ferreus, ut teneat ſe?
> Juv. Sat. I.

PROLOGUE.

Spoken by Mr JONES.

TOO long the Tragic Muſe hath aw'd the ſtage,
And fright'ned wives and children with her rage;
Too long Drawcanſir roars, Parthenope weeps,
While every lady cries, and critic ſleeps.
With ghoſts, rapes, murders, tender hearts they wound,
Or elſe, like thunder, terrify with ſound.
When the ſkill'd actreſs to her weeping eyes,
With artful ſigh, the handkerchief applies,
How griev'd each ſympathizing nymph appears!
And box and gallery both melt in tears.
Or when, in armour of Corinthian braſs,
Heröic actor ſtares you in the face,
And cries aloud, with emphaſis that's fit, on
Liberty, freedom, liberty and Briton;
While frowning, gaping for applauſe he ſtands,
What generous Briton can refuſe his hands?
Like the tame animals deſign'd for ſhow,
You have your cues to clap, as they to bow?
Taught to commend, your judgments have no ſhare;
By chance you gueſs aright by chance you err.

But handkerchiefs and Britain laid aſide,
To-night we mean to laugh, and not to chide.

In days of yore, when fools were held in faſhion,
Tho' now, alas! all baniſh'd from the nation,
A merry jeſter had reform'd his lord,
Who wou'd have ſcorn'd the ſterner Stoic's word.

Bred

PROLOGUE.

Bred in Democritus his laughing ſchools,
Our author flies ſad Heraclitus' rules:
No tears, no terror, plead in his behalf;
The aim of Farce is but to make you laugh.
Beneath the tragic or the comic name,
Farces and puppet-ſhows ne'er miſs of fame.
Since then, in borrow'd dreſs, they've pleas'd the town
Condemn them not, appearing in their own.

Smiles we expect from the good-natur'd few;
As ye are done by, ye malicious, do;
And kindly laugh at him, who laughs at you.

Perſons in the FARCE.

MEN.

LUCKLESS, the Author and Maſter of the Show,		Mr MULLART.
WITMORE, his Friend,		Mr LACY.
MARPLAY ſen.	Comedians,	Mr REYNOLDS.
MARPLAY jun.		Mr STOPLER.
BOOKWEIGHT, a Bookſeller,		Mr JONES.
SCARECROW,	Scriblers,	Mr MARSHAL.
DASH,		Mr HALLAM.
QUIBBLE,		Mr DOVE.
BLOTPAGE,		Mr WELLS jun.
INDEX,		—— ——
JACK, Servant to LUCKLESS,		Mr ACHURCH,
JACK PUDDING,		Mr REYNOLDS.
BANTOMITE,		Mr MARSHAL.

WOMEN.

Mrs MONEYWOOD, the Author's Landlady,	Mrs MULLART.
HARRIOT, her Daughter,	Miſs PALMS.

Perſons in the Puppet-Show.

PLAYER,	Mr Dove.
CONSTABLE,	Mr Wells.
MURDER-TEXT, a Preſbyterian Parſon,	Mr Hallam.
GODDESS of NONSENSE,	Mrs Mullart.
CHARON,	Mr Ayres.
CURRY, a Bookſeller,	Mr Dove.
A POET,	Mr W. Hallam.
Signior OPERA,	Mr Stopler.
Don TRAGEDIO,	Mr Marshal.
Sir FARCICAL COMIC,	Mr Davenport.
Dr ORATOR,	Mr Jones.
Monſieur PANTOMIME,	Mr Knott.
Mrs NOVEL,	Mrs Martin.
ROBGRAVE, the Sexton,	Mr Harris.
SAILOR,	Mr Achurch.
SOMEBODY,	Mr Harris jun.
NOBODY,	Mr Wells jun.
PUNCH,	Mr Reynolds.
JOAN,	Mr Hicks.
Lady KINGCALL,	Miſs Clarke.
Mrs CHEAP'EM,	Mrs Wind.
Mrs GLASS RING,	Mrs Blunt.
Count UGLY,	

THE

AUTHOR's FARCE.

ACT I. SCENE I.

LUCKLESS'ſ *Room in Mrs* MONEYWOOD'ſ *Houſe.*

Mrs MONEYWOOD, HARRIOT, LUCKLESS.

MONEYWOOD.

NEVER tell me, Mr Luckleſs, of your play and your play, I tell you I muſt be paid. I would no more depend on a benefit night of an unacted play, than I would on a benefit ticket in an undrawn lottery. Cou'd I have gueſs'd that I had a poet in my houſe! Cou'd I have look'd for a poet under lac'd cloaths!

Luck. Why not? ſince you may often find poverty under them: nay, they are commonly the ſigns of it. And therefore, why may not a poet be ſeen in them, as well as a courtier?

Money. Do you make a jeſt of my misfortune, Sir?

Luck. Rather my misfortune. I am ſure I have a better title to poverty than you; for notwithſtanding the handſome figure I make, unleſs you are ſo good to invite me, I am afraid I ſhall ſcarce prevail on my ſtomach to dine to-day.

Money. O never fear that: you will never want a dinner till you have dined at all the eating-houſes round.—No one ſhuts their doors againſt you the firſt time; and I think you are ſo kind, ſeldom to trouble them a ſecond.

Luck. No.——And if you will give me leave to walk out of your doors, the devil take me if ever I come into 'em again.

Money. Pay me, Sir, what you owe me, and walk away whenever you pleaſe.

Luck. With all my heart, Madam; get me a pen and ink, and I'll give you my note for it immediately.

Money. Your note! who will diſcount it? Not your bookſeller; for he has as many of your notes, as he has of your works; both good laſting ware, and which are never likely to go out of his ſhop, and his ſcrutoire.

Har. Nay, but Madam, 'tis barbarous to inſult him in this manner.

Money. No doubt you'll take his part. Pray, get you about your buſineſs. I ſuppoſe he intends to pay me, by ruining you. Get you in this inſtant; and remember if ever I ſee you with him again, I'll turn you out of doors.

SCENE II.

LUCKLESS, *Mrs* MONEYWOOD.

Luck. Diſcharge all your ill-nature on me, Madam, but ſpare poor Miſs Harriot.

Money. Oh! then it is plain. I have ſuſpected your familiarity a long while. You are a baſe man. Is it not enough to ſtay three months in my houſe without paying me a farthing, but you muſt ruin my child?

Luck. I love her as my ſoul. Had I the world, I'd give it her all.

Money. But as you happen to have nothing in the world, I deſire you wou'd have nothing to ſay to her. I ſuppoſe you would have ſettled all your caſtles in the air. Oh! I wiſh you had lived in one of them, inſtead of my houſe. Well, I am reſolved, when you are gone away (which I heartily hope will be very ſoon) I'll hang over my door in great red letters, "No lodgings for poets."——Sure, never was ſuch a gueſt as you have been. My floor is all ſpoiled with ink, my windows with verſes, and my door has been almoſt beat down with duns

Luck. Would your houſe had been beaten down, and every thing but my dear Harriot cruſh'd under it.

Money. Sir, Sir ——

Luck. Madam, Madam! I will attack you at your own weapons; I will pay you in your own coin.

Money. I wiſh you'd pay me in any coin, Sir.

Luck. Look ye, Madam. I'll do as much as a reaſonable woman can require; I'll ſhew you all I have; and give you all I have too, if you pleaſe to accept it. [*Turns his pockets inſide out*.

Money. I will not be us'd in this manner. No, Sir, I will be paid, if there be any ſuch thing as law.

Luck. By what law you will put money into my pocket, I know not; for. I never heard of any one who got money by the law but the lawyers. I have told you already, and I tell you again, that the firſt money I get ſhall be yours; and I have great expectations from my play. In the mean time, your ſtaying here can be of no ſervice, and you may poſſibly drive ſome fine thoughts out of my head. I wou'd write a love-ſcene, and your daughter wou'd be more proper company, on that occaſion, than you.

Money. You wou'd act a love-ſcene, I believe; but I ſhall prevent you; for I intend to diſpoſe of myſelf before my daughter.

Luck. Diſpoſe of yourſelf!

Money. Yes, Sir, diſpoſe of myſelf ——'Tis very well known, that I have had very good offers ſince my laſt dear huſband died. I might have had an attorney of New-Inn, for Mr Fillpot, the exciſeman: yes, I had my choice of two parſons, or a doctor of phyſic; and yet I ſlighted them all; yes, I ſlighted them for—for—for you.

Luck. For me!

Money. Yes, you have ſeen too viſible marks of my paſſion; too viſible for my reputation. [*Sobbing*.

Luck. I have heard very loud tokens of your paſſion; but I rather took it for the paſſion of anger than of love.

Money. O! it was love, indeed. Nothing but love, upon my ſoul.

Luck. The Devil! This way of dunning is worſe than the other.

Money. If thou canſt not pay me in money, let me have it in love—— If I break through the modeſty of my ſex, let my paſſion excuſe it.——I know the world will call it an impudent action; but if you will let me reſerve all I have to myſelf, I will make myſelf yours for ever.

Luck. Toll, loll, loll!

Money. And is this the manner you receive my declaration, you poor beggarly fellow? You ſhall repent this; remember you ſhall repent it, remember that. I'll ſhew you the revenge of an injur'd woman.

Luck. I ſhall never repent any thing that rids me of you, I am ſure.

SCENE III.

LUCKLESS, HARRIOT.

Luck. Dear Harriot!

Har. I have waited an opportunity to return to you.

Luck. Oh! my dear, I am ſo ſick.

Har. What's the matter?

Luck. Oh! your mother! your mother!

Har. What, has ſhe been ſcolding ever ſince?

Luck. Worſe! worſe!

Har. Heav'n forbid, ſhe ſhould threaten to go to law with you.

Luck. Oh, worſe! worſe! ſhe threatens to go to church with me. She has made me a generous offer, that if I will but marry her, ſhe will ſuffer me to ſettle all ſhe has upon her.

Har. Generous creature! Sure you will not reſiſt the propoſal?

Luck. Hum! what wou'd you adviſe me to?

Har. Oh, take her, take her, by all means; you will be the prettieſt, fineſt, loveliest, ſweeteſt couple—Auh! what a delicate diſh of matrimony you will make? her age with your youth, her avarice, with your extravagance, and her ſcolding with your poetry.

Luck. Nay, but I am ſerious, and I deſire you wou'd be ſo. You know my unhappy circumſtances, and your mother's wealth. It would be at leaſt a prudent match.

Har. Oh! extremely prudent, ha, ha, ha! the world will ſay, Lord! who could have thought Mr Luckleſs had had ſo much prudence. This one action will overbalance all the follies of your life.

Luck. Faith, I think it will: but, dear Harriot, how can I think of loſing you for ever? And yet, as our affairs ſtand, I ſee no poſſibility of our being happy together. It will be ſome pleaſure too, that I may have it in my power to ſerve you. Believe me, it is with the utmoſt reluctance I think of parting with you. For if it was in my power to have you——

Har. Oh, I am very much oblig'd to you—I believe you—Yes, you need not ſwear, I believe you.

Luck And can you as eaſily conſult prudence, and part with me? for I wou'd not buy my own happineſs at the price of yours.

Har. I thank you, Sir——Part with you——intolerable vanity!

Luck. Then I am reſolv'd; and ſo, my good landlady, have at you.

Har. Stay, Sir, let me acquaint you with one thing; you are a villain! and don't think I am vex'd at any thing, but that I ſhould have been ſuch a fool, as ever to have had a good opinion of you. [*Crying.*

Luck. Ha, ha, ha! caught, by Jupiter! And did my dear Harriot think me in earneſt?

Har. And was you not in earneſt?

Luck. What, to part with thee? A pretty woman will be ſooner in earneſt to part with her beauty, or a great man with his power.

Har. I wiſh I were aſſur'd of the ſincerity of your love.

AIR. *Butter'd Peaſe.*

Luck. Does my deareſt Harriot aſk,
What for love I wou'd purſue?
Wou'd you, charmer, know what taſk
I wou'd undertake for you?

Aſk the bold ambitious, what
He for honours wou'd atchieve?
Or the gay voluptuous, that
Which he'd not for pleaſure give?

Aſk the miſer what he'd do,
To amaſs exceſſive gain?
Or the ſaint, what he'd purſue,
His wiſh'd Heaven to obtain?

Theſe I wou'd attempt, and more:
For, oh! my Harriot is to me,
All ambition, pleaſure, ſtore,
Or what Heav'n itſelf can be!

Har. Wou'd my deareſt Luckleſs know,
What his conſtant Harriot can,
Her tender love and faith to ſhow,
For her dear, her only man.

Aſk the vain coquette, what ſhe
For men's adoration wou'd;
Or from cenſure to be free,
Aſk the vile cenſorious prude.

In a coach and ſix to ride,
What the mercenary jade,
Or the widow to be bride
To a briſk broad-ſhoulder'd blade.

All theſe I wou'd attempt for thee,
Cou'd I but thy paſſion fix;
Thy will, my ſole commander be,
And thy arms my coach and ſix.

Money. [*within.*] Harriot, Harriot.

Har. Hear the dreadful ſummons, adieu. I will take the firſt opportunity of ſeeing you again.

Luck. Adieu, my pretty charmer; go thy ways for the firſt of thy ſex.

SCENE IV.

LUCKLESS, JACK.

Luck. So? what news bring you?

Jack. An't pleaſe your honour I have been at my lord's, and his lordſhip thanks you for the favour you have offer'd of reading your play to him; but he has ſuch a prodigious deal of buſineſs, he begs to be excus'd. I have been with Mr Keyber too: he made me no anſwer at all. Mr Bondwight will be here immediately.

Luck. Jack.

Jack. Sir.

Luck. Fetch my other hat hither. Carry it to the pawnbroker's.

Jack. To your honour's own pawnbroker?

Luck. Ay---And in thy way home call at the cook's ſhop. So, one way or other I find my head muſt always provide for my belly.

SCENE V.

LUCKLESS, WITMORE.

Luck. I am ſurprized! dear Witmore!

Wit. Dear Harry!

Luck. This is kind, indeed; but I do not more wonder at finding a man in this age, who can be a friend to adverſity, than that fortune ſhould be ſo much my friend as to direct you to me; for ſhe is a lady I have not been much indebted to lately.

Wit. She who told me, I aſſure you, is one you have been indebted to a long while.

Luck. Whom do you mean?

Wit. One who complains of your unkindneſs in not viſiting her; Mrs Lovewood.

Luck. Doſt thou viſit her ſtill, then!

Wit. I throw an idle hour away there ſometimes. When I am in an ill humour, I am ſure of feeding it there with all the ſcandal in town; for no bawd is half ſo diligent in looking after girls with an uncrack'd maidenhead, as ſhe in ſearching out women with crack'd reputations.

Luck. The much more infamous office of the two.

Wit. Thou art ſtill a favourer of the women, I find.

Luck. Ay, the women and the muſe; the high roads to beggary.

Wit. What, art thou not cured of ſcribling yet?

Luck. No, ſcribling is as impoſſible to cure as the gout.

Wit. And as ſure a ſign of poverty as the gout of riches. 'Sdeath! in an age of learning and true politeneſs, where a man might ſucceed by his merit, there would be ſome encouragement. But now, when party and prejudice carry all before them; when learning is decried, wit not underſtood, when the theatres are puppet-ſhows, and the comedians ballad-ſingers: when fools lead the town, wou'd a man think to thrive by his wit? If you muſt write, write nonſenſe, write operas, write Hurlothrumbo's, ſet up an oratory, and preach nonſenſe, and you may meet with encouragement enough. Be profane, be ſcurrilous, be immodeſt; if you would receive applauſe, deſerve to receive ſentence at the Old Baily; and if you wou'd ride in a coach, deſerve to ride in a cart.

Luck. You are warm, my friend.

Wit. It is becauſe I am your friend. I cannot bear to hear the man I love ridiculed by fools, by idiots.——To hear a fellow, who had he been born a Chineſe, had ſtarved for want of genius, to have been even the loweſt mechanic, toſs up his empty noddle with an affected diſdain of what he has not underſtood; and women abuſing what they have neither ſeen nor read, from an unreaſonable prejudice to an honeſt fellow, whom they have not known. If thou wilt write againſt all theſe reaſons, get a patron, be pimp to ſome worthleſs man of quality, write panegyrics on him, flatter him with as many virtues as he has vices. Then, perhaps, you will engage his lordſhip, his lordſhip engages the town on your ſide, and then write till your arms ake, ſenſe or nonſenſe, it will go down.

Luck. Thou art too ſatirical on mankind. It is poſſible to thrive in the world by juſtifiable means.

Wit. Ay, juſtifiable, and ſo they are, juſtifiable by cuſtom. What does the ſoldier or phyſician thrive by, but ſlaughter? The lawyer, but by quarrels? The courtier, but by taxes? The poet, but by flattery? I know none that thrive by profiting mankind, but the huſbandman and the merchant; the one gives you the fruit of your own ſoil, the other brings you thoſe from abroad; and yet theſe are repreſented as mean and mechanical, and the others as honourable and glorious.

Luck. Well, but prithee leave railing, and tell me what you wou'd adviſe me to do.

Wit. Do! why, thou art a vigorous young fellow, and there are rich widows in town.

Luck. But I am already engaged.

Wit. Why don't you marry then? ——for I ſuppoſe you are not mad enough to have any engagement with a poor miſtreſs.

Luck. Even ſo, faith, and ſo heartily that I wou'd not change her for the widow of a Crœſus.

Wit. Now thou art undone, indeed. Matrimony clenches ruin beyond retrieval. What unfortunate ſtars wert thou born under! Was it not enough to follow thoſe nine ragged jades the Muſes, but you muſt faſten on ſome earth-born miſtreſs as poor as them?

Mar. jun. [*within.*] Order my chairmen to call on me at St James's. - - No, let them ſtay.

Wit. Heyday! whom the devil have we here?

Luck. The young captain, Sir; no leſs a perſon, I aſſure you.

SCENE VI.

LUCKLESS, WITMORE, MARPLAY *junior.*

Mar. jun. Mr Luckleſs, I kiſs your hands—— Sir, I am your moſt obedient humble ſervant; you ſee, Mr Luckleſs, what power you have over me. I atten

I attend your commands, tho' ſeveral perſons of quality have ſtaid at court for me above this hour.

Luck. I am obliged to you—I have a tragedy for your houſe, Mr Marplay.

Mar. jun. Ha! if you will ſend it to me, I will give you my opinion of it: and if I can make any alterations in it that will be for its advantage, I will do it freely.

Wit. Alterations, Sir?

Mar. jun. Yes, Sir, alterations——I will maintain it, let a play be never ſo good, without alteration it will do nothing.

Wit. Very odd, indeed.

Mar. jun. Did you ever write, Sir?

Wit. No, Sir, I thank Heav'n.

Mar. jun. Oh! your humble ſervant—your very humble ſervant, Sir. When you write yourſelf, you will find the neceſſity of alterations. Why, Sir, wou'd you gueſs that I had alter'd Shakeſpear?

Wit. Yes, faith, Sir, no one ſooner.

Mar. jun. Alack-a-day! Was you to ſee the plays when they are brought to us, a parcel of crude, undigeſted ſtuff. We are the perſons, Sir, who lick them into form, that mould them into ſhape——The poet make the play indeed! the colour-man might be as well ſaid to make the picture, or the weaver the coat: my father and I, Sir, are a couple of poetical tailors: when a play is brought us, we conſider it as a tailor does his coat; we cut it, Sir, we cut it: and let me tell you, we have the exact meaſure of the town; we know how to fit their taſte. The poets, between you and me, are a pack of ignorant ——

Wit. Hold, hold, Sir. This is not quite ſo civil to Mr Luckleſs: beſides, as I take it, you have done the town the honour of writing yourſelf.

Mar. jun. Sir, you are a man of ſenſe, and expreſs yourſelf well. I did, as you ſay, once make a ſmall ſally into Parnaſſus, took a ſort of flying leap over Helicon: but if ever they catch me there again ——Sir, the town have a prejudice to my family; for if any play cou'd have made them aſhamed to damn it, mine muſt. It was all over plot. It wou'd have made a half dozen novels: nor was it cramm'd with a pack of wit-traps, like Congreve and Wycherly, where every one knows when the joke was coming. I defy the ſharpeſt critic of them all to have known when any jokes of mine were coming. The dialogue was plain, eaſy, and natural, and not one ſingle joke in it from the beginning to the end: beſides, Sir, there was one ſcene of tender melancholy converſation, enough to have melted a heart of ſtone; and yet they damn'd it: and they damn'd themſelves; for they ſhall have no more of mine.

Wit. Take pity on the town, Sir.

Mar. jun. I! No, Sir, no. I'll write no more. No more; unleſs I am forc'd to it.

Luck. That's no eaſy thing, Marplay.

Mar jun. Yes Sir. Odes, odes, a man may be oblig'd to write thoſe, you know.

Luck. } *Wit*. } Ha, ha, ha. That's true indeed.

Luck. But about my tragedy, Mr Marplay?

Mar. jun. I believe my father is at the play houſe: if you pleaſe we will read it now: but I muſt call on a young lady firſt—Hey! who's there? is my footman there? Order my chair to the door——your ſervant, gentlemen ——*Caro vieu*. [*Exit ſinging*.

Wit. This is the moſt finiſh'd gentleman I ever ſaw, and hath not, I dare ſwear, his equal.

Luck. If he has, here he comes.

SCENE VII.

LUCKLESS, WITMORE, BOOKWEIGHT.

Luck. Mr Bookweight, your very humble ſervant.

Book. I was told, Sir, that you had particular buſineſs with me.

Luck. Yes, Mr Bookweight; I have ſomething to put into your hands. I have a play for you, Mr Bookweight.

Book. Is it accepted, Sir?

Luck. Not yet.

Book. Oh! Sir, when it is, it will be then time enough to talk about it. A play, like a bill, is of no value till it is accepted: nor indeed when it is, very often. Beſides, Sir, our playhouſes are grown ſo plenty, and our actors ſo ſcarce, that really plays are become very bad commodities. But pray, Sir, do you offer it to the players or the pantentees?

Luck. Oh! to the players, certainly.

Book. You are in the right of that: but a play which will do on the ſtage, will not always do for us; there are your acting plays, and your reading plays.

Wit. I do not underſtand that diſtinction.

Book. Why, Sir, your acting play is entirely ſupported by the merit of the actor; in which caſe, it ſignifies very little whether there be any ſenſe in it or no. Now your reading play is of a different ſtamp, and muſt have wit and meaning in it. Theſe latter I call your ſubſtantive, as being able to ſupport themſelves. The former are your adjective, as what require the buffoonery and geſtures of an actor to be join'd with them, to ſhew their ſignification.

Wit. Very learnedly defined, truly.

Luck. Well, but Mr Bookweight, will you advance fifty guineas on my play?

Book. Fifty guineas! Yes, Sir. You ſhall have them with all my heart, if you will give me ſecurity for them. Fifty guineas for a play? Sir, I would not give fifty ſhillings.

Luck. 'Sdeath, Sir! do you beat me down at this rate?

Book. No, nor fifty farthings. Fifty guineas! Indeed your name is well worth that.

Luck. Jack, take this worthy gentleman, and kick him down ſtairs.

Book. Sir, I ſhall make you repent this.

Jack. Come, Sir, will you pleaſe to bruſh?

Book. Help! Murder! I'll have the law of you, Sir.

Luck. Ha, ha, ha!

SCENE

SCENE VIII.

LUCKLESS, WITMORE, *Mrs* MONEYWOOD.

Money. What noiſe is this? It is a very fine thing truly, Mr Luckleſs, that you will make theſe uproars in my houſe.

Luck. If you diſlike it, it is in your power to drown a much greater. Do you but ſpeak, Madam, and I am ſure no one will be heard but yourſelf.

Money. Very well, indeed! fine reflections on my character! Sir, Sir, all the neighbours know that I have been as quiet a woman as ever lived in the pariſh. I had no noiſes in my houſe till you came. We were the family of love. But you have been a nuiſance to the whole neighbourhood. While you had money, my doors were thundered at every morning at four and five, by coachmen and chairmen; and ſince you have had none, my houſe has been beſieged all day by creditors and bailiffs; then there's the raſcal your man; but I will pay the dog, I will ſcour him——Sir, I am glad you are a witneſs of his abuſes of me.

Wit. I am indeed, Madam, a witneſs how unjuſtly he has abuſed you. [Jack *whiſpers* Luckleſs.

Luck. Witmore, excuſe me a moment.

SCENE IX.

Mrs MONEYWOOD, WITMORE.

Money. Yes, Sir; and, Sir, a man that has never ſhewn one the colour of his money.

Wit. Very hard, truly: how much may he be in your debt, pray? becauſe he has ordered me to pay you.

Money. Ah, Sir, I wiſh he had.

Wit. I am ſerious, I aſſure you.

Money. I am very glad to hear it, Sir. Here is the bill as we ſettled it this very morning. I always thought, indeed, Mr Luckleſs had a great deal of honeſty in his principles; any man may be unfortunate;

nate; but I knew when he had money I ſhould have it; and what ſignifies dunning a man, when he hath it not? now that is a way with ſome people which I could never come into.

Wit. There, Madam, is your money. You may give Mr Luckleſs the receipt.

Money. Sir, I give you both a great many thanks. I am ſure it is almoſt as charitable as if you gave it me: for I am to make up a ſum to-morrow morning. Well, if Mr Luckleſs was but a little ſoberer, I ſhould like him for a lodger exceedingly; for I muſt ſay, I think him a very pleaſant, good-humoured man.

SCENE X.

LUCKLESS, WITMORE, MONEYWOOD.

Luck. Thoſe are words I never heard out of that mouth before.

Money. Ha, ha, ha! you are pleaſed to be merry, ha, ha.

Luck. Why, Witmore, thou haſt the faculty oppoſite to that of a witch, and can't lay a tempeſt. I ſhou'd as ſoon have imagined one man could have ſtopt a cannon-ball in its full force, as her tongue.

Money. Ha, ha, ha! he is the beſt company in the world, Sir, and ſo full of his ſimilitudes.

Wit. Luckleſs, good-morrow: I ſhall ſee you ſoon again.

Luck. Let it be ſoon, I beſeech you: for thou haſt brought a calm into this houſe that was ſcarce ever in it before.

SCENE XI.

LUCKLESS, *Mrs* MONEYWOOD, JACK.

Money. Well, Mr Luckleſs, you are a comical man, to give one ſuch a character to a ſtranger.

Luck. The company is gone, Madam; and now, like true man and wife, we may fall to abuſing one another as faſt as we pleaſe.

Money. Abuſe me as you pleaſe, ſo you pay me, Sir.

Luck. 'Sdeath, Madam, I will pay you.

Money. Nay, Sir, I do not aſk it before it is due. I don't queſtion your payment at all: if you was to ſtay in my houſe this quarter of a year, as I hope you will, I ſhou'd not aſk you for a farthing.

Luck. Toll, loll, loll.—But I ſhall have her begin with her paſſion immediately; and I had rather be the object of her rage for a year, than of her love for half an hour.

Money. But why did you chooſe to ſurprize me with my money? Why did you not tell me you wou'd pay me?

Luck. Why, have I not told you!

Money. Yes, you told me of a play and ſtuff: but you never told me you wou'd order a gentleman to pay me. A ſweet, pretty, good-humour'd gentleman he is, Heav'n bleſs him. Well, you have comical ways with you; but you have honeſty at the bottom, and I'm ſure the gentleman himſelf will own I gave you that character.

Luck. Oh! I ſmell you now.——You ſee, Madam, I am better than my word to you; did he pay it you in gold or ſilver?

Money. All pure gold.

Luck. I have a vaſt deal of ſilver which he brought me, within; will you do me the favour of taking it in ſilver? That will be of uſe to you in the ſhop too.

Money. Any thing to oblige you, Sir!

Luck. Jack, bring out the great bag, number One. Pleaſe to tell the money, Madam, on that table.

Money. It's eaſy told: Heaven knows there's not ſo much on't.

Jack. Sir, the bag is ſo heavy, I cannot bring it in.

Luck. Why then, come and help to thruſt a heavier bag out.

Money. What do you mean?

Luck. Only to pay you in my bedchamber.

Money. Villain, dog, I'll ſwear a robbery, and have you hang'd: rogues, villains!

Luck. Be as noiſy as you pleaſe.—[*Shuts the door.*] Jack, call a coach; and d'ye hear, get up behind it and attend me.

ACT II. SCENE I.

The PLAYHOUSE.

LUCKLESS, MARPLAY *ſenior*, MARPLAY *junior*.

LUCKLESS [*reads.*]

" THEN hence my ſorrow, hence my ev'ry fear;
" No matter where, ſo we are bleſt together.
" With thee the barren rocks, where not one ſtep
" Of human race lies printed in the ſnow,
" Look lovely as the ſmiling infant ſpring."

Mar. ſen. Augh! will you pleaſe read that again, Sir.

Luck. " Then hence my ſorrow, hence my ev'ry
" fear."

Mar. ſen. " Then hence my ſorrow."—Horror is a much better word—and then in the ſecond line—" No matter where, ſo we are bleſt together."——Undoubtedly, it ſhou'd be, No matter where, ſo ſomewhere we're together. *Where* is the queſtion, *ſomewhere* is the anſwer——Read on, Sir.

Luck. " With thee," &c.

Mar. ſen. No, no, I cou'd alter thoſe lines to a much better idea.

" With thee the barren blocks, where not a bit
" Of human face is painted on the bark,
" Look green as Covent-Garden in the ſpring."

Luck. Green as Covent-Garden!

Mar. jun. Yes, yes; Covent-Garden market, where they ſell greens.

Luck Monſtrous!

Mar. ſen. Pray, Sir, read on.

Luck. " Leandra. Oh, my Harmonio, I cou'd
" hear thee ſtill;
" The nightingale to thee ſings out of tune:
" While on thy faithful breaſt my head reclines,
" The downy pillow's hard; while from thy lips
" I drink delicious draughts of nectar down,
" Falernian wines ſeem bitter to my taſte."

Mar. jun. Here's meat, drink, ſinging, and lodging, egad.

Luck. He anſwers.

Mar. jun. But, Sir——

Luck. " Oh, let me pull thee, preſs thee to my
" heart,
" Thou riſing ſpring of everlaſting ſweets;
" Take notice, Fortune, I forgive thee all,
" Thou'ſt made Leandra mine; thou flood of joy,
" Mix with my ſoul, and ruſh thro' ev'ry vein."

Mar. ſen. Thoſe two laſt lines again, if you pleaſe.

Luck. " Thou'ſt made," &c.

Mar. jun. "—Thou flood of joy,
" Mix with my ſoul, and ruſh thro' ev'ry vein."
Thoſe are two excellent lines indeed: I never writ better myſelf: but, Sir—

Luck. " Leandra's mine, go bid the tongue of fate
" Pronounce another word of bliſs like that;
" Search thro' the eaſtern mines and golden ſhores,
" Where laviſh nature pours forth all her ſtores;
" For to my lot cou'd all her treaſures fall,
" I would not change Leandra for them all."
There ends act the firſt, and ſuch an act as, I believe, never was on this ſtage yet.

Mar jun. Nor never will, I hope.

Mar. ſen. Pray, Sir, let me look at one thing.
" Falernian wines ſeem bitter to my taſte."
Pray, Sir, what ſort of wines may your Falernian be? for I never heard of them before: and I am ſure, as I keep the beſt company, if there had been ſuch ſorts of wines, I ſhould have taſted them. Tokay, I have drank, and Lacrimæ I have drank, but what your Falernian is, the devil take me if I can tell.

Mar. jun I fancy, father, theſe wines grow at the top of Parnaſſus.

Luck. Do they ſo, Mr Pert? why then I fancy you have never taſted them.

Mar. ſen. Suppoſe you ſhou'd ſay, The wines of Cape are bitter to my taſte.

Luck. Sir, I cannot alter it.

Mar. ſen. Nor we cannot act it. It won't do, Sir, and ſo you need give yourſelf no farther trouble about it.

Luck. What particular fault do you find?

Mar. jun. Sar, there is nothing that touches me, nothing that is coercive to my paſſions.

Luck. Fare you well, Sir: may another play be coercive to your paſſions!

S C E N E II.

MARPLAY *ſenior*, MARPLAY *junior*.

Mar. ſen. Ha, ha, ha!

Mar. jun. What do you think of the play?

Mar. ſen. It may be a very good one, for ought I know: but I am reſolved, ſince the town will not receive any of mine, they ſhall have none from any other. I'll keep them to their old diet.

Mar. jun. But ſuppoſe they won't feed on't.

Mar. ſen. Then it ſhall be cramm'd down their throats.

Mar. jun. I wiſh, father, you wou'd leave me that art for a legacy, ſince I am afraid I am like to have no other from you.

Mar. ſen. 'Tis buff, child, 'tis buff——true Corinthian braſs: and Heav'n be prais'd, tho' I have given thee no gold, I have given thee enough of that, which is the better inheritance of the two. Gold thou mightſt have ſpent, but this is a laſting eſtate that will ſtick by thee all thy life.

Mar. jun. What ſhall be done with that farce which was damn'd laſt night?

Mar. ſen. Give it them again to-morrow. I have told ſome perſons of quality that it is a good thing, and I am reſolv'd not to be in the wrong: let us ſee which will be weary firſt, the town of damning, or we of being damn'd.

Mar. jun. Rat the town, I ſay.

Mar. ſen. That's a good boy; and ſo ſay I: but prithee, what didſt thou do with the comedy which I gave thee t'other day, that I thought a good one?

Mar. jun. Did as you order'd me, return'd it to the author, and told him it wou'd not do.

Mar. ſen. You did well. If thou writeſt thyſelf, and that I know thou art very well qualified to do, it is thy intereſt to keep back all other authors of any merit, and be as forward to advance thoſe of none.

Mar. jun. But I am a little afraid of writing; for my writings, you know, have far'd but ill hitherto.

Mar. ſen. That [illegible]cauſe thou haſt a little miſtaken the method of writing. The art of writing, boy, is the art of ſtealing old plays, by changing the name of the play; and new ones, by changing the name of the author.

Mar. jun. If it was not for theſe curſed hiſſes and catcalls——

Mar. ſen. Harmleſs muſic, child, very harmleſs muſic, and what, when one is but well ſeaſon'd to it, has no effect at all: for my part, I have been us'd to them.

Mar. jun. Ay, and I have been us'd to them too, for that matter.

Mar. ſen. And ſtood them bravely too. Idle young actors are fond of applauſe, but take my word for it, a clap is a mighty ſilly, empty thing, and does no more good than a hiſs; and therefore, if any man loves hiſſing, he may have his three ſhillings worth at me, whenever he pleaſes. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

A room in BOOKWEIGHT'*s Houſe.*

DASH, BLOTPAGE, QUIBBLE, *writing at ſeveral tables.*

Daſh. Pox on't, I'm as dull as an ox, tho' I have not a bit of one within me. I have not din'd theſe two days, and yet my head is as heavy as any alderman's or lord's. I carry about me ſymbols of all the elements; my head is as heavy as water, my pockets are as light as air, my appetite is as hot as fire, and my coat is as dirty as earth.

Blot. Lend me your Byche, Mr Daſh, I want a rhime for wind.

Daſh. Why there's blind, and kind, and behind, and find, and mind: it is of the eaſieſt termination imaginable; I have had it four times in a page.

Blot. None of thoſe words will do.

Daſh. Why then you may uſe any that end in ond, or and, or end. I am never ſo exact, if the two laſt letters are alike, it will do very well. Read the verſe.

Blot. " Inconſtant as the ſeas, or as the wind."

Daſh. What wou'd you expreſs in the next line?

Blot. Nay, that I don't know, for the ſenſe is out already. I would ſay ſomething about inconſtancy.

Daſh. I can lend you a verſe, and it will do very well too.

" Inconſtancy will never have an end."

End rhimes very well with Wind.

Blot. It will do well enough for the middle of a poem.

Daſh. Ay, ay, any thing will do well enough for the middle of a poem. If you can get but twenty good lines to place at the beginning for a taſte, it will ſell very well.

Quib. So that, according to you, Mr Daſh, a poet acts pretty much on the ſame principles with an oiſter-woman.

Daſh. Pox take your ſimile, it has ſet my chaps a watering: but come, let us leave off work for a while, and hear Mr Quibble's ſong.

Quib. My pipes are pure and clear, and my ſtomach is as hollow as any trumpet in Europe,

Daſh. Come, the ſong.

SONG.

SONG.

AIR. *Ye Commons and Peers.*

How unhappy's the fate
To live by one's pate,
And be forc'd to write hackney for bread?
An author's a joke,
To all manner of folk,
Wherever he pops up his head, his head,
Wherever he pops up his head.

Tho' he mount on that hack,
Old Pegaſus' back,
And of Helicon drink till he burſt,
Yet a curſe of thoſe ſtreams,
Poetical dreams,
They never can quench one's thirſt, &c.

Ah! how ſhou'd he fly
On fancy ſo high,
When his limbs are in durance and hold?
Or how ſhould he charm,
With genius ſo warm,
When his poor naked body's a cold? &c.

SCENE IV.

BOOKWEIGHT, DASH, QUIBBLE, BLOTPAGE.

Book. Fy upon it, gentlemen! what, not at your pens? Do you conſider, Mr Quibble, that it is a fortnight ſince your Letter to a Friend in the Country was publiſh'd? Is it not high time for an anſwer to come out? At this rate, before your anſwer is printed, your letter will be forgot. I love to keep a controverſy up warm. I have had authors who have writ a pamphlet in the morning, anſwer'd it in the afternoon, and anſwer'd that again at night.

Quib. Sir, I will be as expeditious as poſſible; but it is harder to write on this ſide the queſtion, becauſe it is the wrong ſide.

Book. Not a jot. So far on the contrary, that I have known ſome authors chuſe it as the propereſt to ſhew their genius. But let me ſee what you have produced: 'With all deference to what that very learned and moſt ingenions perſon, in his Letter to a 'Friend in the Country, hath advanced.' Very well, Sir; for beſides that it may ſell more of the letter, all controverſial writers ſhould begin with complimenting their adverſaries, as prize-fighters kiſs before they engage. Let it be finiſh'd with all ſpeed. Well, Mr Daſh, have you done that murder yet?

Daſh. Yes, Sir, the murder is done; I am only about a few moral reflections to place before it.

Book. Very well: then let me have the ghoſt finiſhed by this day ſe'nnight.

Daſh. What ſort of a ghoſt wou'd you have this, Sir? the laſt was a pale one.

Book. Then let this be a bloody one. Mr Quibble, you may lay by that life which you are about; for I hear the perſon is recovered: and write me out propoſals for delivering five ſheets of Mr Bailey's Engliſh dictionary every week, till the whole be finiſhed. If you do not know the form, you may copy the propoſals for printing Bailey's dictionary in the ſame manner. The ſame words will do for both.

Enter INDEX.

So, Mr Index, what news with you?

Ind. I have brought my bill, Sir.

Book. What's here? For fitting the motto of Riſum teneatis Amici to a dozen pamphlets, at ſixpence per each, ſix ſhillings——For Omnia vincit Amor, & nos cedamus Amori, ſixpence——For Difficile eſt Satyram non ſcribere, ſixpence—Hum, hum, hum! Sum total, for thirty-ſix Latin mottos, eighteen ſhillings; ditto Engliſh, one ſhilling and nine pence; ditto Greek, four, four ſhillings. Theſe Greek mottos are exceſſively dear.

Ind. If you have them cheaper at either of the univerſities, I will give you mine for nothing.

Book. You ſhall have your money immediately; and pray remember that I muſt have two Latin ſeditious

tious mottos, and one Greek moral motto for pamphlets by to morrow-morning.

Quib. I want two Latin ſentences, Sir, one for page the fourth, in the praiſe of loyalty, and another for page the tenth, in praiſe of liberty and property.

Daſh. The ghoſt wou'd become a motto very well, if you wou'd beſtow one on him.

Book. Let me have them all.

Ind. Sir, I ſhall provide them. Be pleaſed to look on that, Sir, and print me five hundred propoſals, and as many receipts.

Book. 'Propoſals for printing by ſubſcription, a 'new tranſlation of Cicero Of the Nature of the 'Gods, and his Tuſculan Queſtions, by Jeremy Index, Eſq;' I am ſorry you have undertaken this, for it prevents a deſign of mine.

Ind. Indeed, Sir, it does not; for you ſee all of the book that I ever intend to publiſh. It is only a handſome way of aſking one's friends for a guinea.

Book. Then you have not tranſlated a word of it, perhaps.

Ind. Not a ſingle ſyllable.

Book. Well, you ſhall have your propoſals forthwith: but I deſire you wou'd be a little more reaſonable in your bills for the future, or I ſhall deal with you no longer; for I have a certain fellow of a college, who offers to furniſh me with ſecond-hand mottos out of the Spectartor for two-pence each.

Ind. Sir, I only deſire to live by my goods, and I hope you will be pleaſed to allow ſome difference between a neat freſh piece piping hot out of the Claſſics, and old thread-bare, worn-out ſtuff, that has paſt thro' ev'ry pedant's mouth, and been as common at the univerſities as their whores.

S C E N E V.

BOOKWEIGHT, DASH, QUIBBLE, BLOTPAGE, SCARECROW.

Scare. Sir, I have brought you a libel againſt the miniſtry.

Book. Sir, I ſhall not take any thing againſt them; —for I have two in the preſs already. [*Aſide.*

Scare. Then, Sir, I have an apology in defence of them.

Book. That I ſhall not meddle with neither; they don't ſell ſo well.

Scare. I have a tranſlation of Virgil's Æneid, with notes on it, if we can agree about the price.

Book. Why, what price wou'd you have?

Scare. You ſhall read it firſt, otherwiſe how will you know the value?

Book. No, no, Sir, I never deal that way: a poem is a poem, and a pamphlet is a pamphlet with me. Give me a good handſome large volume, with a full promiſing title-page at the head of it, printed on a good paper and letter, the whole well bound and gilt, and I'll warrant it's ſelling——You have the common error of authors, who think people buy books to read ——No, no, books are only bought to furniſh libraries, as pictures and glaſſes, and beds and chairs are for other rooms. Look-ye, Sir, I don't like your title page; however, to oblige a young beginner, I don't care if I do print it at my own expence.

Scare. But pray, Sir, at whoſe expence ſhall I eat!

Book. At whoſe? Why at mine, Sir, at mine. I am as great a friend to learning, as the Dutch are to trade: no one can want bread with me who will earn it; therefore, Sir, if you pleaſe to take your ſeat at my table, here will be every thing neceſſary provided for you: good milk-porridge, very often twice a-day, which is good wholeſome food, and proper for ſtudents: a tranſlator too is what I want at preſent, my laſt being in Newgate for ſhop-lifting. The rogue had a trick of tranſlating out of the ſhops as well as the languages.

Scare. But I am afraid I am not qualified for a tranſlator, for I underſtand no language but my own.

Book. What, and tranſlate Virgil?

Scare. Alas! I tranſlated him out of Dryden.

Book. Lay by your hat, Sir, lay by your hat, and take your ſeat immediately. Not qualified! thou art as well vers'd in thy trade, as if thou hadſt labour'd in my garret theſe ten years. Let me tell you, friend, you will have more occaſion for invention than learning here. You will be obliged to tranſlate books out of all languages, eſpecially French, that were never printed in any language whatſoever.

Scare. Your trade abounds in myſteries.

Book. The ſtudy of bookſelling is as difficult as the law; and there are as many tricks in the one as the other. Sometimes we give a foreign name to our own labours, and ſometimes we put our names to the labours of others. Then as the lawyers have John-a-Nokes and Tom-a-ſtiles, ſo we have Meſſieurs Moore near St Paul's, and Smith near the Royal-Exchange.

SCENE VI.

To them, LUCKLESS.

Luck. Mr Bookweight, your ſervant. Who can form to himſelf an idea more amiable than of a man at the head of ſo many patriots working for the benefit of their country?

Book. Truly, Sir, I believe it is an idea more agreeable to you, than that of a gentleman in the Crown-Office paying thirty or forty guineas for abuſing an honeſt tradeſman.

Luck. Pſhaw! that was only jocoſely done, and a man who lives by wit muſt not be angry at a jeſt.

Book. Look ye, Sir, if you have a mind to compromiſe the matter, and have brought me any money ——

Luck. Haſt thou been in thy trade ſo l[illegible]nd talk of money to a modern author? You [illegible]ell have talked Latin or Greek to him. I hav[illegible] you paper, Sir.

Book. That is not bringing me money, I own. Have you brought me an opera?

Luck. You may call it an opera, if you will, but I call it a puppet-ſhow.

Book. A puppet-ſhow!

Luck. Ay, a puppet-ſhow, and is to be played this night at Drury-Lane playhouſe.

Book. A puppet-ſhow in a playhouſe.

Luck. Ah, why, what have been all the playhouſes a long while but puppet-ſhows?

Book. Why, I don't know but it may ſucceed: at leaſt if we can make out a tolerable good title page; ſo, if you will walk in, if I can make a bargain with you I will: gentlemen, you may go to dinner.

SCENE VII.

Enter JACK-PUDDING, *Drummer, Mob.*

Jack-P. This is to give notice to all gentlemen, ladies, and others, that at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane, this evening will be performed the whole puppet ſhow called The Pleaſures of the Town; in which will be ſhewn the whole court of Nonſenſe, with abundance of ſinging, dancing, and ſeveral other entertainments;——Alſo the comical and diverting humours of Some-body and No-body: Punch and his wife Joan, to be performed by figures; ſome of them ſix foot high. God ſave the King.

[*Drum beats.*

SCENE VIII.

WITMORE *with a paper, meeting* LUCKLESS.

Wit Oh! Luckleſs, I am overjoy'd to meet you: here, take this paper, and you will be diſcouraged from writing, I warrant you.

Luck. What is it?—Oh! one of my play-bills.

Wit. One of thy play-bills!

Luck. Even ſo—I have taken the advice you gave me this morning.

Wit Explain.

Luck. Why, I had ſometime ſince given this performance of mine to be rehearſed, and the actors were all perfect in their parts; but we happened to differ about ſome particulars, and I had a deſign to have given it over; till having my play refuſed by Marplay, I ſent for the managers of the other houſe in a paſſion, joined iſſue with them, and this very evening it is to be acted.

Wit. Well, I wiſh you ſucceſs.

Luck. Where are you going?

Wit. Any where but to hear you damn'd, which I muſt, was I to go to your puppet-ſhow.

Luck. Indulge me in this trial; and I aſſure thee, if it be ſucceſsful, it ſhall be the laſt.

Wit. On that condition I will; but ſhould the torrent run againſt you, I ſhall be a faſhionable friend, and hiſs with the reſt.

Luck. No; a man who cou'd do ſo unfaſhionable and ſo generous a thing, as Mr Witmore did this morning——

Wit. Then I hope you will return it, by never mentioning it to me more. I will now to the pit.

Luck. And I behind the ſcenes.

SCENE III.

LUCKLESS, HARRIOT.

Luck. Dear Harriot!

Har. I was going to the playhouſe to look after you. I am frightned out of my wits; I have left my mother at home with the ſtrangeſt ſort of man, who is enquiring after you: he has rais'd a mob before the door by the oddity of his appearance; his dreſs is like nothing I ever ſaw, and he talks of kings, and Bantam, and the ſtrangeſt ſtuff.

Luck What the devil can he be?

Har. One of your old acquaintance, I ſuppoſe, in diſguiſe; one of his majeſty's officers with his commiſſion in his pocket, I warrant him.

Luck. Well, but have you your part perfect?

Har. I had, unleſs this fellow hath frighten'd it out of my head again; but I am afraid I ſhall play it wretchedly.

Luck. Why ſo?

Har. I ſhall never have aſſurance enough to go thro' with it, eſpecially if they ſhou'd hiſs me.

Luck. O! your maſk will keep you in countenance; and as for hiſſing, you need not fear it. The audience are generally ſo favourable to young beginners: but hiſt, here is your mother, and ſhe has ſeen us.

Adieu,

Adieu, my dear, make what haſte you can to the playhouſe. [*Exit.*

SCENE X.

HARRIOT, MONEYWOOD.

Har. I wiſh I cou'd avoid her, for I ſuppoſe we ſhall have an alarum.

Money. So, ſo, very fine: always together, always caterwauling. How like a hangdog he ſtole off! and it's well for him he did, for I ſhould have rung ſuch a peal in his ears——There's a friend of his at my houſe wou'd be very glad of his company, and I wiſh it was in my power to bring them together.

Har. You wou'd not ſurely be ſo barbarous.

Money. Barbarous, ugh! you whining puling fool! Huſſy, you have not a drop of my blood in you. What, you are in love, I ſuppoſe?

Har. If I was, Madam, it would be no crime.

Money. Yes, Madam, but it wou'd, and a folly too. No woman of ſenſe was ever in love with any thing but a man's pocket. What, I ſuppoſe he has fill'd your head with a pack of romantic ſtuff of ſtreams and dreams, and charms and arms. I know this is the ſtuff they all run on with, and ſo run into our debts, and run away with our daughters.——Come, confeſs, are not you two to live in a wilderneſs together on love! Ah! thou fool! thou wilt find he will pay thee in love, juſt as he has paid me in money. If thou wert reſolv'd to go a begging, why did you not follow the camp? There, indeed, you might have carried a knapſack; but here you will have no knapſack to carry. There, indeed, you might have had a chance of burying half a ſcore buſbands in a campaign; whereas a poet is a long-liv'd animal: you have but one chance of burying him, and that is ſtarving him.

Har. Well, Madam, and I would ſooner ſtarve with the man I love than ride in a coach and ſix with him I hate: and as for his paſſion, you will not make me ſuſpect that, for he hath given me ſuch proofs on't.

Money. Proofs! I ſhall die. Has he given you proofs of love!

Har. All that any modeſt woman can require.

Money. If he has given you all a modeſt woman can require, I am afraid he has given you more than a modeſt woman ſhou'd take: becauſe he has been ſo good a lodger, I ſuppoſe I ſhall have ſome more of the family to keep. It is probable I ſhall live to ſee half a dozen grandſons of mine in Grubſtreet.

SCENE XI.

MONEYWOOD, HARRIOT, JACK.

Jack. Oh, Madam! the man whom you took for a bailiff, is certainly ſome great man; he has a vaſt many jewels and other fine things about him; he offered me twenty guineas to ſhew him my maſter, and has given away ſo much money among the chairmen, that ſome folks believe he intends to ſtand member of parliament for Weſtminſter.

Money. Nay, then I am ſure he is worth inquiring into. So, d'ye hear, ſirrah, make as much haſte as you can before me, and deſire him to part with no more money till I come.

Har. So, now my mother is in purſuit of money, I may ſecurely go in purſuit of my lover; and I am miſtaken, good mamma, if e'en you wou'd not think that the better purſuit of the two.

In generous love tranſporting raptures lie,
Which age, with all its treaſures, cannot buy.

ACT III. SCENE I.

SCENE, *The* PLAYHOUSE.

Enter LUCKLESS *as Maſter of the Show, and* MANAGER.

LUCKLESS.

IT'S very ſurprizing, that after I have been at all this expence and trouble in ſetting my things up in your houſe, you ſhould deſire me to recant; and now too when the ſpectators are all aſſembled, and will either have the ſhow or their money.

Man. Nay, Sir, I am very ready to perform my covenant with you; but I am told that ſome of the players do not like their parts, and threaten to leave the houſe: ſome to the Hay-market, ſome to Goodman's-Fields, and others to ſet up two or three more new playhouſes in ſeveral parts of the town.

Luck. I have quieted all that, and believe there is not one engag'd in the performance, but who is now very well ſatisfied.

Man. Well, Sir, then ſo am I: but pray what is the deſign or plot? for I cou'd make neither head nor tail on't.

Luck. Why, Sir, the chief buſineſs is the election of an arch-poet, or, as others call him, a poet-laureat, to the goddeſs of Nonſenſe. I have introduc'd, indeed, ſeveral other characters, not intirely neceſſary to the main deſign; for I was aſſur'd by a very eminent critic, that in this way of writing, great latitude might be allow'd; and that the writer of puppet-ſhows might take as much more liberty than a writer of operas, as an opera-writer might be allow'd beyond a writer of plays. As for the ſcene, it lies on the other ſide the river Styx, and all the people in my play are dead.

Man. I wiſh they may not be damn'd too, with all my heart.

Luck. Sir, I depend much on the good-nature of the audience; but they are impatient, I hear them knock with their canes. Let us begin immediately: I think we will have an overture play'd on this occaſion. Mr Sido, have you not provided a new overture on this occaſion?

Sido. I have compos'd one.

Luck. Then pray let us have it. Come, Sir, be pleas'd to ſit down by me.

Gentlemen, the firſt thing I preſent you with is Punchinello.

[*The curtain draws, and diſcovers Punch in a great chair.*

PUNCH *ſings.*

AIR I. Whilſt the town's brimfull of folly.

Whilſt the town's brimfull of farces,
Flocking whilſt we ſee her aſſes
Thick as grapes upon a bunch;
Critics, whilſt you ſmile on madneſs,
And more ſtupid, ſolemn ſadneſs;
Sure you will not frown on Punch.

Luck. The next is Punch's wife Joan.

Enter JOAN.

Joan. What can ail my huſband? he is continually humming tunes, tho' his voice be only fit to warble at Hog's Norton. where the pigs would accompany it with organs. I was in hopes death would have ſtopp'd his mouth at laſt. But he keeps his old harmonious humour even in the ſhades.

Punch. Be not angry, dear Joan; Orpheus obtain'd his wife from the ſhades, by charming Pluto with his muſic.

Joan. Sirrah, ſirrah, ſhould Pluto hear you ſing, you cou'd expect no leſs puniſhment than Tantalus has:—nay, the waters would be brought above your mouth, to ſtop it.

Punch. Truly, Madam, I don't wiſh the ſame ſucceſs Orpheus met with; cou'd I gain my own liberty, the devil might have you with all my heart.

AIR II.

Joan, Joan, Joan, has a thund'ring tongue,
And Joan, Joan, Joan, is a bold one.
How happy is he,
Who from wedlock is free:
For who'd have a wife to ſcold one?

Joan. Punch, Punch, Punch, pr'ythee think of your hunch,
Pr'ythee look on your great ſtrutting belly:
Sirrah, if you dare
War with me declare,
I'll beat your fat guts to a jelly.
[*They dance.*

AIR III. Bobbing Joan.

Pun. Joan, you are the plague of my life,
A rope wou'd be welcomer than ſuch a wife.
Joan. Punch, your merits had you but ſhar'd,
Your neck had been longer by half a yard:
Pun. Ugly witch,
Joan. Son of a bitch,
Both. Wou'd you were hang'd or drown'd in a ditch.
[*Dance again.*

Pun. Since we hate like people in vogue,
Let us not call bitch and rogue:
Gentler titles let us uſe,
Hate each other, but not abuſe.
Joan. Pretty dear!
Pun. Ah! Ma Chere!
Both. Joy of my life and only care.
[*Dance and Exeunt.*

Luck. Gentlemen, the next is Charon and a poet; they are diſputing about an affair pretty common with poets——going off without paying.

Enter CHARON, *and a* POET.

Char. Never tell me, Sir, I expect my fare. I wonder what trade theſe authors drive in the other world: I would with as good a will ſee a ſoldier aboard my boat. A tatter'd red coat and a tatter'd black one, have bilk'd me ſo often, that I am reſolv'd never to take either of them up again —— unleſs I am paid before-hand.

Poet. What a wretched thing it is to be poor! My body lay a fortnight in the other world before it was buried. And this fellow has kept my ſpirit a month, ſunning himſelf on the other ſide the river, becauſe my pockets were empty. Wilt thou be ſo kind as to ſhew me the way to the court of Nonſenſe?

Char. Ha, ha! the court of Nonſenſe! Why, pray, Sir, what have you to do there? theſe rags look more like the dreſs of one of Apollo's people, than of Nonſenſe's.

Poet. Why, fellow, didſt thou never carry rags to Nonſenſe?

Char. Truly, Sir, I cannot ſay but I have; but it is a long time ago, I aſſure you. But if you are really bound thither, and are a poet, as I preſume from your outward appearance, you ſhou'd have brought a certificate from the goddeſs's agent, Mr What-d'ye-call-him, the gentleman that writes odes——ſo finely! However, that I may not hear any more of your verſes on the river ſide, I'll e'en carry you over on her account: ſhe pays for all her inſolvent votaries. Look at that account, Sir. She is the beſt deity to me in the ſhades.

Poet. Spirits imported for the goddeſs of Nonſenſe.

Five people of great quality,
Seven ordinary courtiers,
Nineteen attorneys,
Eleven counſellors,
One hundred poets, players, doctors, and apothecaries, fellows of colleges, and members of the royal ſociety.

Luck. Gentlemen, the next is one of Charon's men with a priſoner.

Enter SAILOR, *and a* SEXTON.

Char. How now?

Sail. We have caught him at laſt. This is Mr Robgrave the Sexton, who has plunder'd ſo many ſpirits.

Char. Are you come at laſt, Sir? what have you to ſay for yourſelf? Ha! where are all the jewels and other valuable things you have ſtolen! where are they, ſirrah? ha!

Sex. Alack, Sir, I am but a poor rogue; the pariſh officers and others have had them all; I had only a ſmall reward for ſtealing them.

Char. Then you ſhall have another reward here, Sir. Carry him before juſtice Minos: the moment he gets on the other ſide the water, let him be ſhackled and put aboard. [*Exeunt Sailor and Sexton.*

Poet. Who knows whether this rogue has not robb'd me too. I forgot to look in upon my body before I came away.

Char. Had you any things of value buried with you?

Poet. Things of ineſtimable value; ſix folios of my own works.

Luck. Moſt poets of this age will have their works buried with them.

——The next is the ghoſt of a Director.

Enter DIRECTOR.

Dir. Mr Charon, I want a boat to croſs the river.

Char. You ſhall have a place, Sir: I believe, I have juſt room for you, unleſs you are a lawyer, and I have ſtrict orders to carry no more over yet: Hell is too full of them already.

Dir. Sir, I am a director.

Char. A director! what's that?

Dir. A director of a company, Sir. I am ſurpris'd you ſhould not know what that is: I thought our names had been famous enough on this road.

Char. Oh, Sir, I aſk your honour's pardon; will you be pleas'd to go aboard?

Dir. I muſt have a whole boat by myſelf; for I have two waggon-loads of treaſure that will be here immediately.

Char. It is as much as my place is worth to take any thing of that nature aboard.

Dir. Pſhaw, pſhaw, you ſhall go ſnacks with me, and I warrant we cheat the devil. I have been already too hard for him in the other world—— Do you underſtand what ſecurity on bottomry is? I'll make your fortune.

Char. Here, take the gentleman, let him be well fetter'd, and carried aboard; away with him.

Sail. Sir, here are a waggon load of ghoſts arrived from England, that were knock'd on the head at a late election.

Char. Fit out another boat immediately: but be ſure to ſearch their pockets, that they carry nothing over with them. I found a bank bill of fifty pounds t'other day in the pocket of a cobler's ghoſt, who came hither on the ſame account.

2 *Sail.* Sir, a great number of paſſengers arrived from London, all bound to the court of Nonſenſe.

Char. Some plague, I ſuppoſe, or a freſh cargo of phyſicians come to town from the univerſities.

Luck. Now, gentlemen, I ſhall produce ſuch a ſet of figures, as I defy all Europe, except our own playhouſes, to equal.——Come, put away; pray mind theſe figures.

Enter Don TRAGEDIO, *Sir* FARCICAL COMIC, *Dr* ORATOR, *Signior* OPERA, *Monſieur* PANTOMIME, *and Mrs* NOVEL.

Poet. Ha! Don Tragedio, your moſt obedient ſervant. Sir Farcical! Dr Orator! I am heartily glad to ſee you. Dear Signior Operá! Monſieur Pantomime! Ha! Mynheer Van-treble! Mrs Novel in the ſhades too! What lucky diſtemper could have ſent ſo much good company hither?

Trag. A tragedy occaſioned me to die;
That periſhing the firſt day, ſo did I.

Farce. A paſtoral ſent me out of the world. My life went out in a hiſs; ſtap my vitals.

Ora. A Muggletonian dog ſtabbed me.

AIR IV. Silvia, my deareſt.

Oper. Claps univerſal,
Applauſes reſounding;
Hiſſes confounding
Attending my ſong:
My ſenſes drowned,
And I fell down dead;
Whilſt I was ſinging, ding, dang, dong.

Poet. Well, Monſieur Pantomime, how came you by your fate?

Pantom. [*Makes ſigns to his neck.*]

Poet. Broke his neck. Alas, poor gentleman! And you, Mynheer Van-treble, what ſent you hither? And you, Madam Novel?

AIR V. 'Twas when the ſeas were roaring.

Nov. Oh, pity all a maiden,
Condemn'd hard fates to prove;
I rather would have laid in,
Than thus have died for love!
'Twas hard to encounter death-a,
Before the bridal bed;
Ah! would I had kept my breath-a,
And loſt my maidenhead.

Poet. Poor lady!

Char. Come, my maſters, it is a rare freſh gale; if you pleaſe I'll ſhew you aboard.

Luck. Obſerve, gentlemen, how theſe figures walk off. The next, gentlemen, is a Blackamore lady, who comes to preſent you with a ſaraband and caſtanots. [*A dance.*
Now, gentlemen and ladies, I ſhall produce a Bookſeller who is the prime miniſter of Nonſenſe, and the Poet.

Enter BOOKSELLER *and* POET.

Poet. 'Tis ſtrange, 'tis wondrous ſtrange!

Book. And yet 'tis true. Did you obſerve her eyes?

Poet. Her ears rather, for there ſhe took the infection. She ſaw the Signior's viſage in his voice.

Book. Did you not mark how ſhe melted when he ſung?

Poet. I ſaw her like another Dido. I ſaw her heart riſe up to her eyes and drop again to her ears.

Book That a woman of ſo much ſenſe as the Goddeſs of Nonſenſe ſhould be taken thus at firſt ſight! I have ſerv'd her faithfully theſe thirty years as a bookſeller in the upper world, and never knew her guilty of one folly before.

Poet. Nay, certainly, Mr Curry, you know as much of her as any man.

Book. I think I ought; I am ſure I have made as large oblations to her as all Warwick-lane and Paternoſter-row.

Poet. But is ſhe, this night, to be married to Signior Opera?

Book. This is to be the bridal night. Well, this will be the ſtrangeſt thing that has happen'd in the ſhades ſince the rape of Proſerpine.—But now I think on't, what news bring you from the other world?

Poet. Why, affairs go much in the ſame road there as when you were alive; authors ſtarve, and bookſellers grow fat. Grub-ſtreet harbours as many pirates as ever Algiers did. They have more theatres than are at Paris, and juſt as much wit as there is at Amſterdam; they have ranſack'd all Italy for ſingers, and all France for dancers.

Book. And all hell for conjurers.

Poet. My lord-mayor has ſhorten'd the time of Bartholomew-fair in Smithfield, and ſo they are reſolved to keep it all the year round at the other end of the town.

Book. I find matters go ſwimmingly; but I fancy I am wanted. If you pleaſe, Sir, I will ſhew you the way.

Poet. Sir, I follow you. [*Exeunt.*

Enter PUNCH.

Punch. You fiddler.

Luck. Well, Punch, what's the matter now?

Punch. What do you think my wife Joan is about?

Luck. Faith, I can't tell.

Punch. Odſbobs, ſhe is got with three women of quality at quadrille.

Luck. Quadrille! ha, ha!

Punch. I have taken a reſolution to run away from her, and ſet up a trade.

Luck. A trade? why, you have no ſtock.

Punch. O, but I intend to break, cheat my creditors, and ſo get one.

Luck. That bite is too ſtale, Mr Punch.

Punch. Is it? Then I'll e'en turn lawyer. There is no ſtock required there, but a ſtock of impudence.

Luck. Yes, there is a ſtock of law, without which you will ſtarve at the bar.

Punch. Ay, but I'll get upon the bench, then I ſhall ſoon have law enough; for then I can make any thing I ſay to be law.

Luck. Huſh, you ſcurrilous raſcal.

Punch. Odſbobs, I have hit it now.

Luck. What now?

Punch. I have it at laſt; the rareſt trade! Punch, thou art made for ever.

Luck. What conceit has the fool got in his head now?

Punch. I'll e'en turn parliament man.

Luck. Ha ha, ha! Why, ſirrah, thou haſt neither intereſt nor qualification.

Punch. How! not intereſt? Yes, Sir, Punch is very well known to have a very conſiderable intereſt in all the corporations in England: and for qualification, if I have no eſtate of my own, I can borrow one.

Luck. This will never do, maſter Punch——You muſt think of ſomething you have a better qualification for.

Punch. Ay, why then I'll turn great man, that requires no qualification whatſoever.

Luck. Get you gone, you impudent rogue. Gentlemen, the next figures are Some-body and Nobody, come to preſent you with a ſong and a dance.

Enter SOME-BODY *and* NO-BODY.

AIR VI. Black Jock.

Some. Of all the men in London town,
Or knaves, or fools, in coat or gown,
The repreſentative am I.
No. Go thro' the world, and you will find,
In all the claſſes of human kind,
Many a jolly Nobody.
For him a No-body ſure we may call,
Who during his life does nothing at all,
But eat, and ſnore,
And drink, and rore,
From whore to the tavern, from tavern to whore,
With a lac'd coat, and that is all.

Luck. Gentlemen, this is the end of the firſt interlude.

Luck. Now, gentlemen, I ſhall preſent you with the moſt glorious ſcene that has ever appear'd on the ſtage; it is the COURT OF NONSENSE. Play away, ſoft muſic, and draw up the curtain.

The curtain drawn up to ſoft muſic, diſcovers the GODDESS OF NONSENSE *on a throne; the* ORATOR *in a tub;* TRAGEDIO, *&c. attending.*

Nonſ. Let all my votaries prepare
To celebrate this joyful day.

Luck. Gentlemen, obſerve what a lover of recitativo Nonſenſe is.

Nonſ. Monſieur Pantomime! you are welcome.

Pant. [*Cuts a caper.*]

Nonſ. Alas, poor gentleman! he is modeſt: you may ſpeak; no words offend, that have no wit in them.

Maſt. Why, Madam Nonſenſe, don't you know that Monſieur Pantomime is dumb? and yet, let me tell you, he has been of great ſervice to you; he is the only one of your votaries that ſets people aſleep without talking. But here's Don Tragedio will make noiſe enough.

Trag. Yes, Tragedio is indeed my name,
Long ſince recorded in the rolls of fame,
At Lincoln's-Inn, and eke at Drury-Lane.
Let everlaſting thunder ſound my praiſe,
And forked lightning in my ſcutcheon blaze:
To Shakeſpear, Johnſon, Dryden, Lee, or Rowe,
I not a line, no, not a thought, do owe.
Me, for my novelty, let all adore;
For as I wrote, none ever wrote before.

Nonſ. Thou art doubly welcome, welcome.

Trag. That welcome, yes, that welcome is my due,
Two tragedies I wrote, and wrote for you:
And had not hiſſes, hiſſes me diſmay'd,
By this, I'd writ two-ſcore, two-ſcore by jay'd.

Luck. By jay'd! Ay, that's another excellence of the Don's; he does not only glean up all the bad words of other authors, but makes new bad words of his own.

Far. Nay, i'gad, I have made new words, and ſpoil'd old ones too, if you talk of that; I have made foreigners break Engliſh, and Engliſhmen break Latin. I have as great a confuſion of languages in my play, as was at the building of Babel.

Luck. And ſo much the more extraordinary, becauſe the author underſtands no language at all.

Far. No language at all!——Stap my vitals.

Nonſ. Dr Orator, I have heard you.

Orat. Ay, and you might have heard me too; I bawl'd loud enough, I'm ſure.

Maſt. She might have heard you: but if ſhe had underſtood your advertiſements, I will believe Nonſenſe to have more underſtanding than Apollo.

Orat. Have underſtood me, Sir! What has underſtanding to do? My hearers would be diverted, and they are ſo; which could not be if underſtanding were neceſſary, becauſe very few of them have any.

Nonſ. You've all deſerv'd my hearty thanks——but here my treaſure I beſtow. [*To* Opera.

Oper. Your highneſs knows what reward I prize.

AIR

AIR VII. Lillibolera.

Op. Let the fooliſh philoſopher ſtrive in his cell,
By wiſdom, or virtue, to merit true praiſe;
The ſoldier in hardſhip and danger ſtill dwell,
That glory and honour may crown his laſt days;
The patriot ſweat,
To be thought great;
Or beauty all day at the looking glaſs toil;
That popular voices
May ring their applauſes,
While a breath is the only reward of their toil.

But would you a wiſe man to action incite,
Be riches propos'd the reward of his pain:
In riches is center'd all human delight;
No joy is on earth but what gold can obtain.
If women, wine,
Or grandeur fine,
Be moſt your delight, all theſe riches can;
Wou'd you have men to flatter?
To be rich is the matter;
When you cry he is rich, you cry a great man.

Nonſ. [*Repeating in an ecſtaſy.*]
"When you cry he is rich, you cry a great man."
Braviſſimo! I long to be your wife.

Luck. Gentlemen, obſerve and take notice how the Goddeſs of Nonſenſe is ſmitten by muſic, and falls in love with the ghoſt of Signior Opera.

Novel. If all my romances ever pleas'd the ear of my goddeſs—if ever I found favour in her ſight—— Oh, do not rob me thus!

Nonſ. What means my daughter?

Novel. Alas, he is my huſband!

Curry. But though he were your huſband in the other world, death ſolves that tye, and he is at liberty now to take another; and I never knew any one inſtance of a huſband here, who would take the ſame wife again.

AIR VIII. Whilſt I gaz'd on Cloe trembling.

Novel. May all maids from me take warning,
How a lover's arms they fly:
Leſt the firſt kind offer ſcorning,
They, without a ſecond, die.

How unhappy is my paſſion!
How tormenting is my pain!
If you thwart my inclination,
Let me die for love again.

Curry. Again! What, did you die for love of your huſband?

Novel. He knows he ought to have been ſo.—He ſwore he would be ſo.——Yes, he knows I dy'd for love; for I dy'd in childbed.

Orat. Why, Madam, did you not tell me all the road hither, that you was a virgin?

AIR IX. Highland Laddy.

Oper. I was told, in my life,
Death for ever,
Did diſſever,
Men from ev'ry mortal ſtrife,
And that greateſt plague, a wife.

For had the prieſts poſſeſt men,
That to Tartarus
Wives came after us,
Their devil would be a jeſt then,
And our devil a wife.

Nonſ. Avaunt, polluted wretch! begone;
Think not I'll take pollution to my arms:
No, no —— no, no —— no, no, no.

Oper. Well, ſince I can't have a goddeſs, I'll e'en prove a man of honour.——I was always in love with thee, my angel; but ambition is a dreadful thing. However, my ghoſt ſhall pay the debts of my body.

Novel. Now I am happy, verily.

Oper. My long loſt dear!

Novel. My new-found bud!

AIR

AIR X. Duſty Miller.

Oper. Will my charming creature
Once again receive me?
Tho' I prov'd a traitor,
Will ſhe ſtill believe me?

I will well repay thee,
For paſt faults of roving,
Nor ſhall any day be
Without proofs of loving.

On that tender lilly breaſt
Whilſt I lie panting,
Both together bleſt,
Both with tranſports fainting.

Both. Sure no human hearts
Were ever ſo delighted!
Death, which others parts,
Hath our ſouls united.

AIR XI. Over the Hills and far away.

Oper. Were I laid on Scotland's coaſt,
And in my arms embrac'd my dear,
Let ſcrubbado do its moſt,
I wou'd know no grief or fear.

Nov. Were we caſt on Ireland's ſoil,
There confin'd in bogs to dwell,
For thee potatoes I wou'd boil,
No Iriſh ſpouſe ſhould feaſt ſo well.

Oper. And tho' we ſcrubb'd it all the day,
Nov. We'd kiſs and hug the night away;
Oper. Scotch and Iriſh both ſhould ſay,
Both. Oh, how bleſt! how bleſt are they!

Orat. Since my goddeſs is diſengaged from one lover, may the humbleſt, yet not the leaſt diligent of her ſervants, hope ſhe wou'd ſmile on him.

Luck. Maſter Orator, you had beſt try to charm the goddeſs with an oration.

Orat. The hiſtory of a fiddle and a fiddleſtick is going to be held forth; being particularly deſired in a letter from a certain queriſt on that point.

A fiddle is a ſtateſman: Why? Becauſe it's hollow. A fiddleſtick is a drunkard: Why? Becauſe it loves ros'ning.

Luck. Gentlemen, obſerve how he balances his hands; his left hand is the fiddle, and his right hand is the fiddleſtick.

Orat. A fiddle is like a beau's noſe, becauſe the bridge is often down; a fiddleſtick is like a mountebank, becauſe it plays upon a crowd. —— A fiddle is like a ſtockjobber's tongue, becauſe it ſounds different notes; and a fiddleſtick is like a ſtockjobber's wig, becauſe it has a great deal of horſehair in it.

Luck. And your oration is like yourſelf, becauſe it has a great deal of nonſenſe in it.

Nonſ. In vain you try to charm my ears, unleſs by muſic.

Orat. Have at you then.

Maſt. Gentlemen, obſerve how the Doctor ſings in his tub. Here are no wires; all alive; alive, ho!

Orat. Chimes of the times, to the tune of Moll Pately.

AIR XII. Moll Pately.

All men are birds by nature, ſir,
Tho' they have not wings to fly;
On earth a ſoldier's a creature, ſir,
Much reſembling a kite in the ſky;
The phyſician is a fowl, ſir,
Whom moſt men call an owl, ſir,
Who by his hooting,
Hooting, hooting,
Hooting, hooting,
Hooting, hooting,
Tells us that death is nigh.

The uſurer is a ſwallow, ſir,
That can ſwallow gold by the jorum;
A woodcock is 'Squire Shallow, ſir;
And a gooſe is oft of the quorum;

The gameſter is a rook, Sir;
The lawyer with his Coke, Sir,
Is but a raven,
Croaking, croaking,
Croaking, croaking,
Croaking, croaking,
After the ready Rhinorum.

Young virgins are ſcarce as rails, Sir;
Plenty as batts the night-walkers go;
Soft Italians are nightingales, Sir,
And a cock-ſparrow mimics a beau:
Like birds men are to be caught, Sir;
Like birds men are to be bought, Sir:
Men of a ſide,
Like birds of a feather,
Will flock together,
Will flock together,
Both ſexes like birds will—— too.

Nonſ. 'Tis all in vain.

Trag. Is Nonſenſe of me then forgetful grown,
And muſt the Signior be preferred alone?
Is it for this, for this, ye Gods, that I
Have in one ſcene made ſome folks laugh, ſome cry?
For this does my low bluſt'ring language creep,
At once to wake you, and to make you ſleep?

Farc. And ſo all my puns, and quibbles, and conundrums, are quite forgotten? Stap my vitals!

Orat. More chimes of the times, to the tune of, Rogues, rogues, rogues.

AIR XIII. There was a jovial beggar.

The ſtone that all things turns at will
To gold, the chymiſt craves;
But gold, without the chymiſt's ſkill,
Turns all men into knaves.
For a cheating they will go, &c.
The merchant wou'd the courtier cheat,
When on his goods he lays
Too high a price——but faith he's bit,
For a courtier never pays.
For a cheating, &c.

The lawyer, with a face demure,
Hangs him who ſteals your pelf;
Becauſe the good man can endure
No robber but himſelf.
For a cheating they will go, &c.

Betwixt the quack and highwayman
What difference can there be?
Though this with piſtol, that with pen,
Both kill you for a fee.
For a cheating, &c.

The huſband cheats his loving wife,
And to a miſtreſs goes;
Whilſt ſhe at home, to eaſe her life,
Carouſes with the beaus.
For a cheating, &c.

That ſome directors cheats were,
Some have made bold to doubt;
Did not the ſupercargo's care
Prevent their finding out.
For a cheating, &c.

The tenant doth the ſteward nick,
(So low this art we find)
The ſteward doth his Lordſhip trick,
My Lord tricks all mankind.
For a cheating, &c.

One ſect there are to whoſe fair lot
No cheating arts do fall,
And thoſe are parſons call'd, God wot;
And ſo I cheat you all.
For a cheating, &c.

Enter CHARON.

Char. An't pleaſe your majeſty, there is an odd ſort of a man on t'other ſide of the water ſays he's recommended to you by ſome people of quality.—Egad, I don't care to take him aboard, not I.——He ſays his name is Harloborumbo——rumbo —— Hurloborumbolo, I think he calls himſelf; he looks like one of Apollo's people, in my opinion; he ſeems to be mad enough to be a real poet.

Nonſ. Take him aboard.

Char. I had forgot to tell your ladyſhip, I hear rare news; they ſay you are to be declared Goddeſs of Wit.

Curry. That's no news, Mr Charon.

Char. Well, I'll take Hurloborumbo aboard.

[*Exit* Charon.

Orat. I muſt win the Goddeſs before he arrives, or elſe I ſhall loſe her for ever.—A rap at the times.

AIR XIV. When I was a dame of honour.

Come all who've heard my cuſhion beat,
Confeſs me as full of dulneſs
As any egg is full of meat,
Or full moon is of fulneſs:
Let the juſtice and his clerk both own
Than theirs my dulneſs greater;
And tell how I've harangu'd the town,
When I was a bold orator.

The lawyer wrangling at the bar,
While the reverend bench is dozing,
The ſcribbler in a pamphlet war,
Or Grubſtreet bard compoſing:
The trudging quack in ſcarlet cloke,
Or coffee-houſe politic prater;
Can none come up to what I have ſpoke
When I was a bold orator.

The well-bred courtier telling lies,
Or Levée hunter believing;
The vain coquette that rolls her eyes,
More empty fops deceiving:
The parſon of diſſenting gang,
Or flattering dedicator,
Could none of them like me harangue,
When I was a bold orator.

Enter PUNCH.

Punch. You, you, you.

Luck. What's the matter, Punch.

Punch. Who is that?

Luck. That's an orator, maſter Punch.

Punch. An orator——What's that?

Luck. Why, an orator is—egad, I can't tell what——he is a man that nobody dares diſpute with.

Punch. Say you ſo? I'll be with him preſently. Bring out my tub there. I'll diſpute with you, I'll warrant. I am a Muggletonian.

Orat. I am not.

Punch. Then you are not of my opinion.

Orat. Sirrah, I know that you and your whole tribe would be the death of me; but I am reſolv'd to proceed to confute you, as I have done hitherto, and as long as I have breath you ſhall hear me; and I hope I have breath enough to blow you all out of the world.

Punch. If noiſe will.

Orat. Sir, I——

Punch. Hear me, Sir.

Nonſ. Hear him; hear him; hear him.

AIR XV. Hey Barnaby, take it for warning.

Punch. No tricks ſhall ſave your bacon,
Orator, Orator, you are miſtaken;
Punch will not be thus confuted,
Bring forth your reaſons, or you are nonſuited.
Heigh ho.

No tricks ſhall ſave your bacon.
Orator, Orator, you are miſtaken.
Orat. Inſtead of reaſons advancing.
Let the diſpute be concluded by dancing.
Ti, to.
[*They dance.*

Nonſ. 'Tis all in vain: a virgin I will live; and oh, great Signior, pr'ythee take this chaplet, and ſtill wear it for my ſake.

Luck. Gentlemen, obſerve how Signior Opera is created arch-poet to the Goddeſs of Nonſenſe.

Trag. And does great Nonſenſe then at length determine
To give the chaplet to that ſinging vermin?

Nonſ. I do.

Trag. Then Opera come on, and let us try,
Whether ſhall wear the chaplet, you or I.

AIR XVI. Be kind and love.

Nov. Oh, ſpare to take his precious life away;
So ſweet a voice muſt ſure your paſſion lay:
O hear his gentle murmurs firſt, and then,
If you can kill him, I will cry Amen.

Trag. Since but a ſong you aſk, a ſong I'll hear;
But tell him, that laſt ſong is his laſt prayer.

AIR XVII.

Oper. Barbarous cruel man,
I'll ſing thus while I'm dying, I'm dying like a ſwan,
A ſwan,
A ſwan,
With my face all pale and wan.
More fierce art thou than pirates,
Than pirates,
Whom the Siren's muſic charms,
Alarms,
Diſarms;
More fierce than men on the high roads,
On the high—roads,
On the high—roads,
More fierce than men on the high roads,
When Polly Peachum warms,
The devil
Was made civil,
By Orpheus's tuneful charms;
And can-------
-----------------n,
He gentler prove than man?

Trag. I cannot do it—— [*Sheaths his ſword.*
Methinks I feel my fleſh congeal'd to bone,
And know not if I'm fleſh and blood, or ſtone.

Pant. [*Runs ſeveral times round the ſtage.*]

Nonſ. Alas, what means Monſieur Pantomime?

Curry. By his pointing to his head, I ſuppoſe he would have the chaplet.

Nonſ. Pretty youth!

Nov. Oh, my dear, how ſhall I expreſs the trouble of my ſoul?

Oper. If there be ſympathy in love, I'm ſure I felt it: for I was in a damnable fright too.

Nov. Give me a buſs then.

AIR XVIII. Under the Greenwood Tree.

In vain a thouſand heroes and kings
 Should court me to their arms,
In vain ſhould give me a thouſand fine things,
 For thee I'd reſerve my charms:
On that dear breaſt, intranc'd in joy,
 Oh, let me ever be.
Oper. Oh, how will I kiſs thee,
How I'll embliſs thee,
When thou art a-bed with me!

Nonſ. [*repeats.*] Oh, how I will kiſs thee, &c.
Alas! what might noiſe?

Luck. Gentlemen, the next is a meſſenger.

Enter MESSENGER.

Meſſ. Stay, goddeſs, nor with haſte the prize bequeath,
A mighty ſpright now haſtens here beneath;
Long in the world your noble cauſe he fought,
Your laureat there, your precepts ſtill he taught.
To his great ſon he leaves the laurel now,
And haſtens to receive one here below.
Nonſ. I can't revoke my grant, but he
Shall manager of our players be.

Luck. The next is Count Ugly, from the opera-houſe in the Hay-market.

Enter COUNT UGLY.

Nonſ. Too late, O mighty count, you came.
Count. I aſk not for myſelf, for I diſdain
O'er the poor ragged tribe of bards to reign.
Me did my ſtars to happier fates prefer,
Sur-intendant dez plaiſirs d'Angleterre;

If maſquerades you have, let thoſe be mine,
But on the Signior let the laurel ſhine.
Trag. What is thy plea? Has't written?
Count. No, nor read,
But if from dulneſs any may ſucceed,
To that and nonſenſe I good title plead,
Nought elſe was ever in my maſquerade.
Nonſ. No more, by Styx I ſwear
That Opera the crown ſhall wear.

AIR.

Nov. Away each meek pretender flies;
Opera, thou haſt gain'd the prize.
Nonſenſe grateful ſtill muſt own,
That thou beſt ſupport'ſt her throne.
For her ſubſcriptions thou didſt gain
By thy ſoft alluring ſtrain,
When Shakeſpear's thought,
And Congreve's, brought
Their aids to ſenſe in vain.

Beauties who ſubdue mankind,
Thy ſoft chains alone can bind;
See within their lovely eyes
The melting wiſh ariſe:
While thy ſounds enchant the ear,
Lovers think the nymph ſincere;
And projectors,
And directors,
Loſe a while their fear.

Enter CHARON.

Luck. How now, Charon? you are not to enter yet.

Char. To enter, Sir! Alack-a-day! we are all undone: here are Sir John Bindover and a conſtable coming in.

Enter Sir JOHN, *and* CONSTABLE.

Conſt. Are you the maſter of the puppet-ſhow?
Luck. Yes, Sir.

Conſt. Then you muſt along with me, Sir; I have a warrant for you, Sir.

Luck. For what?

Sir John. For abuſing Nonſenſe, ſirrah.

Conſt. People of quality are not to have their diverſions libell'd at this rate.

Luck. Of what do you accuſe me, gentlemen?

Sir John. Shall you abuſe Nonſenſe, when the whole town ſupports it?

Luck. Pox on't, had this fellow ſtaid a few moments longer, till the dance had been over, I had been eaſy. Harkye, Mr Conſtable, ſhall I only beg your patience for one dance, and then I'll wait on you?

Sir John. Sirrah, don't try to corrupt the magiſtrate with your bribes: here ſhall be no dancing.

Nov. What does this fellow of a conſtable mean by interrupting our play?

AIR XX. Fair Dorinda.

Oh, Mr Conſtable,
Drunken raſcal,
Would I had thee at the Roſe.
May'ſt thou be beaten,
Hang'd up and eaten,
Eaten by the carrion crows.
The filth that lies in common ſhores,
May it ever lie in thy noſe,
May it ever
Lie in thy noſe,
Oh may it lie in thy noſe.

Luck. Mollify yourſelf, Madam.

Sir John. That is really a pretty creature, it were a piece of charity to take her to myſelf for a handmaid. [*Aſide.*

Conſt. Very pretty, very pretty truly:—If magiſtrates are to be abus'd at this rate, the devil may be a conſtable for me. Harkee, Madam, do you know who we are?

Nov. A rogue, Sir.

Conſt. Madam, I'm a conſtable by day, and a juſtice of peace by night.

Nov. That is, a buzzard by day, and an owl by night.

A I R XXI. New-market.

Conſt. Why, Madam, do you give ſuch words as theſe
To a conſtable and a juſtice of peace?
I fancy you'll better know how to ſpeak,
By that time you've been in Bridewell a week
Have beaten good hemp, and been
Whipt at a poſt;
I hope you'll repent, when ſome ſkin
You have loſt.
But if this makes you tremble, I'll not be ſevere;
Come down a good guinea, and you ſhall be clear.

Nov. Oh, Sir John, you, I am ſure, are the commander in this enterprize. If you will prevent the reſt of our ſhow, let me beg you will permit the dance.

A I R XXII. Charming Betty.

Sweeteſt honey,
Good Sir Johny,
Pr'ythee let us take a dance,
Leave your canting,
Zealous ranting,
Come and ſhake a merry haunch.
Motions firing,
Sounds inſpiring,
We are led to ſofter joys;
Where in trances
Each ſoul dances,
Muſic then ſeems only noiſe.

Sir John. Verily, I am conquer'd. Pity prevaileth over ſeverity, and the fleſh hath ſubdued the ſpirit. I feel a motion in me, and whether it be of grace or no I am not certain. Pretty maid, I cannot be deaf any longer to your prayers; I will abide the performing a dance, and will myſelf, being thereto mov'd by an inward working, accompany you therein, taking for my partner that reverend gentleman.

Maſt. Then ſtrike up.

Enter WITMORE, MONEYWOOD, HARRIOT, *and* BANTOMITE.

Wit. Long live his majeſty of Bantam!

Money. Heaven preſerve him!

Bant. Your gracious father, Sir, greets you well.

Luck. What, in the devil's name, is the meaning of this?

Bant. I find he is entirely ignorant of his father.

Wit. Ay, Sir, it is very common in this country for a man not to know his father.

Luck. What do you mean?

Bant. His features are much alter'd.

Luck. Sir, I ſhall alter your features, if you proceed.

Bant. Give me leave to explain myſelf. I was your tutor in your earlieſt days, ſent by your father, his preſent majeſty Francis IV. King of Bantam, to ſhew you the world. We arrived at London; when one day, among other frolics, our ſhip's crew ſhooting the bridge, the boat overſet. and of all our company, I and your royal ſelf were only ſaved by ſwimming to Billingſgate: but though I ſaved my life, I loſt for ſome time my ſenſes, and you, as I then fear'd, for ever. When I recover'd, after a long fruitleſs ſearch for my royal maſter, I ſet ſail for Bantam, but was driven by the winds on far diſtant coaſts, and wander'd ſeveral years, till at laſt I arriv'd once more at Bantam.——Gueſs how I was receiv'd——The king order'd me to be impriſon'd for life. At laſt ſome lucky chance brought thither a merchant, who offer'd this jewel as a preſent to the king of Bantam.

Luck. Ha! it is the ſame which was tied upon my arm, which by good luck I preſerv'd from every other accident, till want of money forced me to pawn it.

Bant. The merchant being ſtrictly examined, ſaid he had it of a pawnbroker; upon which I was immediately diſpatch'd to England, and the merchant kept cloſe priſoner till my return, then to be puniſh'd with death, or rewarded with the government of an iſland.

Luck. Know then, that at that time when you loſt your ſenſes, I alſo loſt mine. I was taken up half-dead by a waterman, and convey'd to his wife, who ſold oyſters, by whoſe aſſiſtance I recover'd. But the waters of the Thames, like thoſe of Lethe, had caus'd an intire oblivion of my former fortune.—But now it breaks in like light upon me, and I begin to recollect it all. Is not your name Gonſalvo?

Bant. It is.

Luck. Oh, my Gonſalvo! } [*Embrace.*
Bant. Oh, my deareſt lord! }

Luck. But ſay, by what lucky accident you diſcover'd me.

Bant. I did intend to have advertis'd you in the Evening-poſt, with a reward; but being directed by the merchant to the pawnbroker, I was accidentally there enquiring after you, when your boy brought your hat. (Oh, ſad remembrance, that the ſon of a king ſhould pawn a hat!) The woman told me, that was the boy that pawn'd the jewel, and of him I learnt where you lodg'd.

Luck. Prodigious fortune! [*A wind-horn without.*

Enter MESSENGER.

Meſſ. An expreſs is arriv'd from Bantam with the news of his majeſty's death.

Bant. Then, Sir, you are king. Long live Henry I. king of Bantam.

Omnes. Long live Henry I. king of Bantam.

Luck. Witmore, I now may repay your generoſity.

Wit. Fortune has repaid me, I am ſure, more than ſhe ow'd, by conferring this bleſſing on you.

Luck. My friend. — But here I am indebted to the golden goddeſs, for having given me an opportunity to aggrandiſe the miſtreſs of my ſoul, and ſet her on the throne of Bantam. Come, Madam, now you may lay aſide your maſk: ſo once more repeat your acclamations; Long live Henry and Harriot, king and queen of Bantam.

Omnes. Huzza!

AIR XXIII. Gently touch thc the warbling lyre.

Har. Let others fondly court a throne,
All my joy's in you alone;
Let me find a crown in you,
Let me find a ſceptre too,
Equal in the court or grove,
I am bleſt, do you but love.

Luck. Were I not with you to live,
Bantam would no pleaſure give.
Happier in ſome foreſt I
Could upon that boſom lie.
I would guard you from all harms,
While you ſlept within my arms.

Har. Would an Alexander riſe,
Him I'd view with ſcornful eyes.

Luck. Would Helen with thy charms compare,
Her I'd think not half ſo fair:
Deareſt ſhalt thou ever be.

Har. Thou alone ſhalt reign in me.

Conſt. I hope your majeſty will pardon a poor ignorant conſtable: I did not know your worſhip, I aſſure you.

Luck. Pardon you——Ay, more——You ſhall be chief conſtable of Bantam——You, Sir John, ſhall be chief Juſtice of peace; you, Sir, my orator; you my poet-laureat; you my bookſeller; you, Don Tragedio, Sir Farcical, Signior Opera, and Count Ugly, ſhall entertain the city of Bantam with your performances; Mrs Novel, you ſhall be a romance-writer; and to ſhew my generoſity, Monſieur Marplay, you ſhall ſuperintend my theatres. All proper ſervants for the king of Bantam.

Money. I always thought he had ſomething more than ordinary in him.

Luck. This gentlewoman is the queen's mother.

Money. For want of a better, gentlemen.

AIR XXIV. Oh ponder well.

Money. Alack, how alter'd is my fate!
What changes have I ſeen!
For I, who lodgings let of late,
Am now again a queen.

Punch. And I, who in this puppet-ſhow
Have played Punchinello,
Will now let all the audience know
I am no common fellow.

Punch. If his majeſty of Bantam will give me leave, I can make a diſcovery which will be to his ſatiſfaction. You have choſe for a wife Henrietta, princeſs of Old Brentford.

Omnes. How!

Punch. When the king of Old Brentford was expell'd by the king of the New, the queen flew away with her little daughter, then about two years old, and was never heard of ſince. But I ſufficiently recollect the phiz of my mother; and thus I aſk her bleſſing.

Money. Oh, my ſon!

Har. Oh, my brother!

Punch. Oh, my ſiſter!

Money. I am ſorry, in this pickle, to remember who I am. But alas! too true is all you've ſaid. Tho' I have been reduced to let lodgings, I was the queen of Brentford; and this, tho' a player, is a king's ſon.

Enter JOAN.

Joan. Then I am a king's daughter, for this gentleman is my huſband.

Money. My daughter!

Har } My ſiſter!
Luck. }

Punch. My wife!

Luck. Strike up kettle-drums and trumpets.——Punch, I will reſtore you into your kingdom at the expence of my own. I will ſend an expreſs to Bantam for my army.

Punch. Brother, I thank you. ——And now, if you pleaſe, we will celebrate theſe happy diſcoveries with a dance.

A DANCE.

Luck. Taught by my fate, let never bard deſpair,
Tho' long he drudge, and feed on Grubſtreet air:
Since him (at laſt) 'tis poſſible to ſee
As happy and as great a king as me.

EPILOGUE.

1 POET,	Mr JONES.
2 POET,	Mr DOVE.
3 POET,	Mr MARSHAL.
4 POET,	Mr WELLS jun.
PLAYER,	Miſs PALMS.
CAT,	Mrs MARTIN.

Four POETS ſitting at a Table.

1 Po. *BRethren, we are aſſembled here to write*
An Epilogue, which muſt be ſpoke to night.
2 Po. *Let the firſt lines be to the pit addreſs'd.*
3 Po. *If critics too were mention'd, it were beſt;*
With fulſome flattery let them be cramm'd,
But if they damn the play——
1 Po. ——*Let them be damn'd.*
2 Po. *Suppoſing, therefore, brother, we ſhou'd lay*
Some very great encomiums on the play?
3 Po. *It cannot be amiſs*——
1 Po. ——*Now mount the boxes,*
Abuſe the beaus, and compliment the doxies.
4 Po. *Abuſe the beaus!—But how?*
1 Po. ——*Oh, never mind.*
In every modern epilogue you'll find
Enough which we may borrow of that kind.
3 Po. *What will the name of imitation ſoften?*
1 Po. *Oh, Sir, you cannot ſay good things too often;*
And ſure thoſe thoughts which in another ſhine,
Become not duller by becoming mine.
3 Po. *I'm ſatisfy'd.*
1 Po. ——*The audience is already*
Divided into critic, beau, and lady;
Nor box, nor pit, nor gallery, can ſhow
One, who's not lady, critic, or a beau.
3 Po. *It muſt be very difficult to pleaſe*
Fancies ſo odd, ſo oppoſite as theſe.

1 Po. *The taſk is not ſo difficult, as put;*
There's one thing pleaſes all.
2 Po. ———*What is that?*
1 Po. ———*Smut.*
For as a whore is lik'd for being tawdry,
So is an epilogue for———
3 Po. [in a paſſion.] ——*I order you,*
On pain of my departure, not to chatter,
One word ſo very ſav'ry of the creature:
For, by my pen, might I Parnaſſus ſhare,
I'd not to gain it all offend the fair.
1 Po. *You are too nice—for ſay whate'er we can,*
Their modeſty is ſafe behind a fan.
4 Po. *Well, let us now begin.*
3 Po. ——— *But we omit*
An epilogue's chief decoration, wit.
1 Po. *It hath been ſo; but that ſtale cuſtom's broken;*
Though dull to read, 'twill pleaſe you when 'tis ſpoken.

Enter the AUTHOR.

Auth. *Fy, Gentlemen, the audience now hath ſtaid*
This half hour for the epilogue———
All Po. ———*'Tis not made.*
Auth. *How! then I value not your aid of that,*
I'll have the epilogue ſpoken by a Cat.
Puſs, puſs, puſs, puſs, puſs, puſs, puſs.

Enter CAT.

1 Po. ———*I'm in a rage!*
When cats come on, Poets ſhould leave the ſtage.
[Exeunt *Poets.*

Cat. *Mew, mew.*
Auth. ———*Poor puſs, come hither, pretty rogue,*
Who knows but you may come to be in vogue?
Some ladies like a cat, and ſome a dog.

Enter a PLAYER.

Play. *Caſs, caſs, caſs, caſs! Fy, Mr Luckleſs, what*
Can you be doing with that filthy Cat?
[Exit *Cat.*

Auth. *Oh! curſt misfortune—what can I be doing?*
This devil's coming in has prov'd my ruin.
She's driv'n the Cat and Epilogue away.
Play. *Sure you are mad, and know not what you ſay.*
Auth. *Mad you may call me, Madam; but you'll own,*
I hope, I am not madder than the town.
Play. *A Cat to ſpeak an Epilogue——*
Auth. ———*Speak!—no*
Only to act the Epilogue in dumb ſhow.
Play. *Dumb-ſhow!*
Auth. ——*Why, pray, is that ſo ſtrange in comedy?*
And have you not ſeen Perſeus and Andromeda?
Where you may find ſtrange incidents intended,
And regular intrigues begun and ended,
Tho' not a word doth from an actor fall;
As 'tis polite to ſpeak in murmurs ſmall,
Sure 'tis politer not to ſpeak at all.
Play. *But who is this?*

Enter CAT as a woman.

Auth. ————*I know her not* ——
Cat. —— *I that*
Am now a Woman, lately was a Cat.
[Turns to the Audience.
Gallants, you ſeem to think this transformation
As ſtrange as was the rabbits procreation;
That 'tis as odd a Cat ſhou'd take the habit
Of breeding us, as we ſhou'd breed a rabbit.
I'll warrant eating one of them wou'd be
As eaſy to a beau, as —— kiſſing me.
I wou'd not for the world that thing ſhould catch us,
Cries ſcar'd Sir Plume——For gad, my lord, ſhe'd ſcratch us.
Yet let not that deter you from your ſport,
You'll find my nails are pair'd exceeding ſhort.
But——Huſh!—what murmurs thro' the benches roam!
The huſbands cry—We've cat enough at home.
This transformation can be ſtrange to no man,
There's a great likeneſs 'twixt a cat and Woman.

Chang'd by her lover's earneſt prayers, we're told,
A Cat was, to a beauteous maid of old.
Cou'd modern huſbands thus the gods prevail on,
Oh Gemini! what wife wou'd have no tail on!
Puſs wou'd be ſeen where madam lately ſat,
And ev'ry Lady Townly be a Cat.
Say, all of you, whoſe honey-moon is over,
What wou'd you give ſuch changes to diſcover;
And waking in the morn, inſtead of bride,
To find poor puſſy purring by your ſide.
Say, gentle huſbands, which of you wou'd curſe,
And cry, My wife is alter'd for the worſe?
Shou'd to our ſex the gods like juſtice ſhow,
And at our pray'rs transform our huſbands too,
Many a lord, who now his fellow ſcorns,
Wou'd then exceed a Cat by nothing——but his horns.
So plenty then wou'd be thoſe foes to rats,
Henley might prove that all mankind are Cats.

THE

LOTTERY.

A FARCE,

As it was acted at the

THEATRE-ROYAL in Drury-Lane, 1731.

PROLOGUE.

Spoken by Mr. CIBBER Jun.

AS Tragedy preſcribes to paſſion rules,
So Comedy delights to puniſh fools;
And while at nobler game ſhe boldly flies,
Farce challenges the vulgar as her prize.
Some follies ſcarce perceptible appear
In that juſt glaſs, which ſhews you as you are.
But Farce ſtill claims a magnifying right,
To raiſe the object larger to the ſight,
And ſhew her inſect fools in ſtronger light.
Implicit faith is to her poets due,
And all her laughing legends ſtill are true.
Thus when ſome conjurer does wives tranſlate,
What dull, affected critic damns the cheat?
Or ſhould we ſee credulity profound,
Give to ten thouſand fools, Ten Thouſand Pound;
Should we behold poor wretches horſe away
The labour of a twelvemonth in a day:
Nay, ſhould our poet, with his muſe agog,
Show you an Alley-broker for a rogue,
Tho' 'tis a moſt impoſſible ſuggeſtion,
Faith! think it all but Farce, and grant the queſtion.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

Mr STOCKS,	Mr HARPER.
JACK STOCKS,	Mr CIBBER jun.
Firſt BUYER,	Mr BERRY.
Second BUYER, a Hackney-coachman,	Mr MULLART.
LOVEMORE,	Mr STOPPELAER.
WHISK,	Mr R. WETHERILT.

WOMEN.

CHLOE,	Miſs RAFTOR.
Mrs STOCKS, fiſter-in-law to Stocks,	Mrs WETHERILT.
JENNY,	Miſs WILLIAMS.
LADY,	Mrs OATES.

Servants, *&c.*

SCENE, LONDON.

THE

THE

LOTTERY.

SCENE I.

Mr STOCKS *alone.*

AIR I.

A LOTTERY is a taxation
Upon all the fools in the creation;
And Heaven be prais'd,
It is eaſily rais'd,
Credulity's always in faſhion:
For folly's a fund
Will never loſe ground,
While fools are ſo riſe in the nation.

[*Knocking without.*

Enter 1 BUYER.

1 *Buy.* Is not this a houſe where people buy lottery-tickets?

Sto. Yes, Sir—I believe I can furniſh you with as good tickets as any one.

1 *Buy.* I ſuppoſe, Sir, 'tis all one to you what number a man fixes on.

Sto Any of my numbers.

1 *Buy.* Becauſe I would be glad to have it, Sir, the number of my own years, or my wife's; or if I could not have either of thoſe, I would be glad to have it the number of my mother's.

Sto. Ay, or ſuppoſe, now, it was the number of your grandmother's?

1 *Buy.* No, no! ſhe has no luck in lotteries: ſhe

had

had a whole ticket once, and got but fifty pounds by it.

Sto. A very unfortunate perſon, truly. Sir, my clerk will furniſh you, if you'll walk that way up to the office. Ha, ha, ha!—There's one ten thouſand pound got.—What an abundance of imaginary rich men will one month reduce to their former poverty!

[*Knocking without.*

Come in.

Enter 2 BUYER.

2 *Buy*. Does not your Worſhip let horſes, Sir?

Sto Ay, friend.

2 *Buy*. I have got a little money by driving a hackney-coach, and I intend to ride it out in the lottery.

Sto. You are in the right; it is the way to drive your own coach.

2 *Buy*. I don't know, Sir, that—but I am willing to be in Fortune's way, as the ſaying is.

Sto You are a wiſe man, and it is not impoſſible you may be a rich one.—'Tis not above—— no matter how many to one, but that you are this night worth ten thouſand pounds.

AIR II. Free-maſon's tune.

Here are the beſt horſes
That ever run courſes,
Here is the beſt pad for your wife, Sir;
Who rides one a-day,
If luck's in his way,
May ride in a coach all his life, Sir.

The ſportſman eſteems
The horſe more than gems,
That leaps o'er a pitiful gate, Sir;
But here is the hack,
If you ſit but his back,
Will leap you into an eſtate, Sir.

2 *Buy*. How long a man may labour to get that at work, which he can get in a minute at play!

AIR

AIR III. Black Jock.

The ſoldier in a hard campaign,
Gets leſs than the gameſter, by throwing a main,
Or dealing to bubbles, and all, all that:
The ſtouteſt ſailor, every one knows,
Gets leſs than the courtier, with cringing bows,
And, Sir, I'm your vaſſal, and all, all that:
And town-bred ladies too, they ſay,
Get leſs by virtue than by play:
And dowdy Joan
Had ne'er been known,
Nor coach had been her ladyſhip's lot,
But for the black ace, and all, all that.

And belike you, Sir, I would willingly ride upon the number of my coach.

Sto. Mr Trick, let that gentleman have the number of his coach—[*Aſide.*] No matter whether we have it or no.——As the gentleman is riding to a caſtle in the air, an airy horſe is the propereſt to carry him. [*Knocking hard without.*] Heyday! this is ſome perſon of quality, by the impudence of the footman.

Enter LADY.

Lady. Your ſervant, Mr Stocks.

Sto. I am your ladyſhip's moſt obedient ſervant.

Lady. I am come to buy ſome tickets, and hire ſome horſes, Mr Stocks.—I intend to have twenty tickets and ten horſes every day.

Sto. By which, if your ladyſhip has any luck, you may very eaſily get 30 or 40,000 l.

Lady. Pleaſe to look at theſe jewels, Sir—they coſt my lord upwards of 6000 l.——I intend to lay out what you will lend upon 'em.

Sto. If your ladyſhip pleaſes to walk up into the dining-room, I'll wait on you in a moment.

Enter PORTER.

Well, friend, what's your buſineſs?

Porter. Here's a letter for you, an't pleaſe you.

Sto. [*Reading.*]

" Brother STOCKS,

" Here is a young lady come to lodge at my houſe " from the country, has deſir'd me to find out ſome " one who may inſtruct her how to diſpoſe of 10,000l. " to the beſt advantage.—I believe you will find her " worth your acquaintance. She ſeems a mere no" vice, and I ſuppoſe has juſt receiv'd her fortune; " which is all that's needful from

" Your affectionate brother,

" TIM. STOCKS."

Very well.———It requires no other anſwer than that I will come. [*Knocking hard without.*
Heyday! more people of quality— [*Opens the door.*

Enter JACK STOCKS.

Ha!

J. Sto. Your ſervant, brother.

Sto. Your ſervant, brother.——Why, I have not ſeen you this age.

J. Sto. I have been a man of great buſineſs lately.

Sto. I hope your buſineſs has turn'd to a good account.—I hope you have clear'd handſomely.

J. Sto. Ay, it has turn'd to a very good account.—I have clear'd my pockets, faith——

Sto. I am ſorry for that—but I hope you will excuſe me at preſent, dear brother.—Here is a lady of quality ſtays for me; but as ſoon as this hurry of buſineſs is over, I ſhou'd be very glad to—drink a diſh with you at any coffeehouſe you will appoint.

J. Sto. Oh! I ſhall not detain you long; and ſo, to cut the affair as ſhort as poſſible, I deſire you wou'd lend me a brace of hundreds.

Sto. Brother!

J. Sto. A brace of hundreds! Two hundred pounds, a in your own language.

Sto. Dear Jack, you know I wou'd as ſoon lend you two hundred pounds as one; but I am at preſent ſo out of caſh, that—

J. Sto. Come, come, brother, no equivocation; two hundred pounds I muſt have, and will.

Sto. Muſt have, and will!——Ay, and ſhall have too, if you can get 'em.

J. Sto. 'Sdeath, you fat raſcal! what title had you to come into the world before me?

Sto. You need not mention that, brother; you know my riches, if I have any, are owing to my induſtry; as your poverty is to your lazineſs and extravagance—and I have rais'd myſelf by the Multiplication table, as you have undone yourſelf at the Hazard-table.

J. Sto. That is as much as to ſay, I have undone myſelf like a gentleman, and you have rais'd yourſelf like a pick-pocket—Sirrah, you are a ſcandal to the family; you are the firſt tradeſman that has been in it.

Sto. Ay, and the firſt that has been worth a groat in it. And tho' you don't deſerve it, I have thought on a method to put you in a way to make you the ſecond. There, read that letter. [J. Stocks *reads it to himſelf.*] Well, Sir, what ſay you to 10,000 l. and a wife?

J. Sto. Say! that I only want to know how to get them.

Sto. Nothing ſo eaſy——As ſhe is certainly very ſilly, you may depend upon it ſhe will be very fond of a lac'd coat and a lord——Now, I will make over both thoſe to you in an inſtant.—— My Lord Lace hath pawn'd his laſt ſuit of birth-night clothes to me; and as I intend to break before he can redeem 'em—the clothes and the title are both at your ſervice.—So, if your lordſhip pleaſes to walk in, I will but juſt diſpatch my lady, and be with you.

J. Sto. If I can but nick this time, ame's-ace I defy thee.

SCENE II.

Enter LOVEMORE.

What a chace has this girl led me? However, I have track'd her all the way, till within a few miles of this town.——If I ſtart her again, let her look to't.—I am miſtaken, or ſhe began to find her paſſion growing too violent before ſhe attempted this flight——and when once a woman is fairly wounded, let her fly where ſhe will, the arrow ſtill ſticks in her ſide.

AIR IV. Cloe is falſe, but ſtill ſhe is charming.

Women in vain love's powerful torrent
  With unequal ſtrength oppoſe;
Reaſon a while may ſtem the ſtrong current,
  Love ſtill at laſt her ſoul o'erflows.
    Pleaſures inviting,
    Paſſions exciting,
    Her lover charms her,
    Of pride diſarms her;
      Down, down ſhe goes.

Enter WHISK.

So, Whiſk, have you heard any news?

Whiſk. News, Sir! ay, I have heard news, and ſuch as will ſurpriſe you.

Love. What! no rival I hope?

Whiſk. You will have rivals enough now, I ſuppoſe.——Why, your miſtreſs is got into fine lodgings in Pall Mall——I found her out by meeting that baggage her maid, in the ſtreet, who wou'd ſcarce ſpeak to me. I followed her to the door; where, in a very few minutes, came out ſuch a proceſſion of milliners, mantua-makers, dancing-maſters, fiddlers, and the devil knows what; as I once remember at the equipping a parliament-man's country lady, to pay her firſt love.

Love. Ha! by all that's infamous, ſhe is in keeping already; ſome bawd has made prize of her as ſhe alighted from the ſtage-coach.——While ſhe has been flying from my arms, ſhe has taken into the colonel's.

AIR V.

How hapleſs is the virgin's fate,
  Whom all mankind's purſuing;
For while ſhe flies this treach'rous bait,
  From that ſhe meets her ruin.
So the poor hare, when out of breath,
  From hound to man is preſt,
Then ſhe encounters certain death,
  And ſcapes the gentler beaſt. [*Exeunt.*

Enter CHLOE *and* JENNY.

Chloe. Oh Jenny! mention not the country, I faint at the ſound of it——there is more pleaſure in the rattling of one hackney-coach, than in all the muſic that romances tell us of ſinging birds and falling waters.

AIR. VI.

Farewel, ye hills and vallies;
  Farewel, ye verdant ſhades;
I'll make more pleaſant ſallies,
  To plays and maſquerades.
With joy for town I barter
  Thoſe banks where flowers grow;
What are roſes to a garter?
  What lilies to a beau?

Jenny. Ay, Madam——wou'd the 10,000 l. prize were once come up.

Chloe. Oh Jenny! be under no apprehenſion. It is not only from what the fortune-teller told me, but I ſaw it in a coffee-diſh, and I have dreamt of it every night theſe three weeks——Indeed, I am ſo ſure of it, that I think of nothing but how I ſhall lay it out.

Jenny. Oh, Madam! there is nothing ſo eaſy in nature, in this town, as laying it out.

Chloe. Firſt of all, Jenny, I will buy one of the beſt houſes in town, and furniſh it.—Then I intend to ſet up my coach and ſix, and have ſix fine tall footmen.—Then I will buy me as many jewels as I can wear.—All ſorts of fine clothes I'll have too.—Theſe I intend to purchaſe immediately: and then for the reſt, I ſhall make a ſhift, you know, to ſpend it in houſekeeping, cards, plays, and maſquerades, and other diverſions.

Jenny. It is poſſible you may.——She has laid out twenty thouſand of her ten already.

Chloe. Well, I ſhall be a happy creature.—I long to begin methinks.

AIR VII. In Perſeus and Andromeda.

Oh what pleaſures will abound,
When I've got ten thouſand pound!
Oh how courted I ſhall be!
Oh what will kneel to me!
Who'll diſpute my
Wit and beauty,
When my golden charms are found?
O what flattery,
In the lottery,
When I've got ten thouſand pound!

An't I ſtrangely alter'd in one week, Jenny? Don't I begin to look as if I was born and bred in London, already? Eh! does not the naſty red colour go down out of my face? Han't I a good dael of pale quality in me?

Jenny. Oh, Madam, you come on glorioufly.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Madam! here's one Mr Spadille at the door.

Chloe. Mr Spadille! who is that?

Jenny. It is your ladyſhip's Quadrille maſter, Madam.

Chloe. Bid him come another time.——I an't in a humour to learn any thing more this morning.——I'll take two leſſons to-morrow tho'—for they tell me one is not qualify'd for any company, till one can play at Quadrille.

Serv. Mr Stocks the broker too, Madam, is below.

Chloe. Oh! that's the gentleman who is to diſpoſe of my ten thouſand pound for me——deſire him to walk up. Is it not pretty now to have ſo many viſitants? Is not this better than ſtaying at home for whole weeks, and ſeeing none but the curate and his wife, or the ſquire?

Jenny. It may be better for you than ſeeing the ſquire; for, if I miſtake not, had you ſtay'd many weeks longer, he had been a dangerous viſitant.

Chloe. I am afraid ſo too ——for I began to be in love with him; and when once a woman's in love, Jenny—

Jenny. Lud have mercy upon her!

AIR VIII.

Chloe. When love is lodg'd within the heart,
Poor virtue to the outworks flies;
The tongue, in thunder, takes her part,
She darts in lightning from the eyes.
From lips and eyes with gifted grace,
In vain we keep our charming ſin;
For love will find ſome weaker place
To let the dear invader in.

Enter STOCKS.

Sto. I had the honour of receiving your commands, Madam.

Chloe. Sir, your humble ſervant.—Your name is Mr Stocks, I ſuppoſe.

Sto. So I am call'd in the Alley Madam; a name, tho' I ſay it, which wou'd be as well receiv'd at the bottom of a piece of paper, as any He's in the kingdom. But if I miſtake not, Madam, you wou'd be inſtructed how to diſpoſe of 10,000 l.

Chloe. I wou'd ſo, Sir.

Sto. Why, Madam, you know at preſent, public intereſt is very low, and private ſecurities very difficult to get——and I am ſorry to ſay it, I am afraid there are ſome in the Alley who are not the honeſteſt men in the kingdom. In ſhort, there is one way to diſpoſe of money with ſafety and advantage, and that is—to put it into the charitable corporation.

Chloe. The charitable corporation! pray what is that?

Sto. That is, Madam, a method invented, by ſome very wiſe men, by which the rich may be charitable to the poor, and be money in pocket by it.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Madam, here is one my Lord Lace deſires to know if you are at home.

Chloe. Lord Lace! Oh Gemini! who's that?

Sto. He is a man of the firſt quality, and one of the beſt eſtates in the kingdom: why, he's as rich as a Supercargo.

Enter JACK STOCKS, *as Lord Lace.*

J. Sto. Bid the chair return again an hour hence, and give orders that the chariot be not us'd this evening.——Madam, I am your moſt obedient humble ſervant.—Ha! Egad, Madam, I aſk ten thouſand pardons, I expected to have met another lady.

Sto. I ſuppoſe you lordſhip means the counteſs of—

J. Sto. Ay, the counteſs of Seven Dials.

Sto. She left theſe lodgings this day ſe'nnight, my Lord, which was the day this lady came into 'em.

J. Sto. I ſhall never forgive myſelf being guilty of ſo great an error; and unleſs the breath of my ſubmiſſion can blow up the redundancy of your good-nature, till it raiſe the wind of compaſſion, I ſhall never be able to get into the harbour of quiet.

Sto. Well ſaid, faith—the boy has got ſomething by following plays, I ſee. [*Aſide.*

Chloe. Is this one of your proud lords? Why, he is ten times more humble than the parſon of our pariſh.

J. Sto. Ha! and are you then reſolv'd not to pardon me? Oh! it is now too late; you may pronounce my pardon with your tongue, when you have executed me with your eyes.

AIR IX.

Chloe. Alas, my lord, you're too ſevere,
Upon ſo ſlight a thing:
And ſince I dare not ſpeak for fear,
Oh give me leave to ſing.
A rural maid you find in me,
That fate I've oft deplor'd;
Yet think not I can angry be
With ſuch a noble lord.

J. Stocks. Oh raviſhing! exquiſite! ecſtaſy! joy! tranſport! miſery! flames! ice! how ſhall I thank this goodneſs that undoes me!

Chloe. Undoes you, my lord!

J. Stocks. Oh Madam! there is a hidden poiſon in thoſe eyes, for which nature has no antidote.

Jenny. My lord has the ſame deſigns as the ſquire, I fear; he makes love too violent for it to be honourable.

Chloe. Alas, my lord! I am young and ignorant ——tho' you ſhall find I have ſenſe enough to make a good market. [*Aſide.*

J. Stocks. Oh Madam! you wrong your own charms.—Mr Stocks, do you ſend this lady the diamond ring you have of mine to ſet.——Shall I beg you wou'd honour it with wearing? It is a trifle, not worth above 5000 l.——You ſhall have it again the day after we are marry'd, upon honour.
[*Aſide to* Stocks.

Stocks. It ſhall be ſent to your lordſhip's order in three days time——which will be after you are marry'd, if you are marry'd at all. [*Aſide to him.*

Chloe. Indeed, my lord, I know not what to ſay.

J. Stocks. Nor I neither, rat me! [*Aſide.*] Say but you will be mine.

Chloe. You are too haſty, Sir. Do you think I can give my conſent at firſt ſight?

J. Stocks. Oh! it is the town-way of wooing; people of faſhion never ſee one another above twice before marriage——

Stocks. Which may be the reaſon why ſome of 'em ſcarce ſee one another above twice after they are marry'd.

J. Stocks. I wou'd not preſume to aſk ſuch a thing, if I were not preſſed by neceſſity. For if I am not marry'd in a day or two, I ſhall be obliged to marry another whom I have promis'd already.

Chloe. Nay, if you have been once falſe, you will always be ſo.

AIR X.

I've often heard
Two things averr'd
By my dear grandmamma,
To be as ſure,
As light is pure,
As knavery's in law;
The man who'll prove
Once falſe to love
Will ſtill make truth his ſcoff;
And woman that
Has—you know what,
Will never leave it off.

Stocks. I ſee, Madam, this is a very improper time for buſineſs, ſo I'll wait on your ladyſhip in the afternoon.

J. Stocks. Let me beg leave, Madam, to give you a little advice. I know ſomething of this town------ Have nothing to do with that fellow; he is one of the greateſt rogues that ever was hang'd.

Chloe. I thought, my lord, you had ſpoke juſt now as if you had employed him too.

J. Stocks. Yes, Madam, yes,——the fellow has ſome 40 or 50,000 l. of mine in his hands, which if ever I get out, I give you my honour, if I can help it, I'll never ſee his face again. But as for your money, don't trouble yourſelf about it, leave the diſpoſal of that to me.---I'll warrant I find ways to lay it out.

Enter LOVEMORE.

Lovem. My Chloe! Ha! can you turn thus diſdainful from me?

Chloe. Sir, I know you not.

Lovem. Not know me! And is this the fellow for whom I am unknown? this powderpuff.——Have you ſurrender'd to him in one week, what I have been ages in ſoliciting.

J. Sto. Harkye, Sir,————whoever you are, I wou'd not have you think, becauſe I am a beau, and a lord, that I won't fight.

Lovem. A lord! oh! there it is! the charms are in the title.—What elſe can you ſee in this walking perfume-ſhop, that can charm you? Is this the virtue, and the virtue, that you have been thundering in my ears? 'Sdeath! I am diſtracted! that ever a woman ſhou'd be proof againſt the arts of mankind, and fall a ſacrifice to a monkey.

AIR XI. Son Confuſo.

Some confounded planet reigning,
Muſt have mov'd you to theſe airs;
Or could your inclination
Stoop ſo low,
From my paſſion,
To a beau?
Blood and thunder!
Wounds and wonder!
Can you under-rate me ſo?
But ſince I, to each pretender
My pretenſions muſt ſurrender,
Farewel all your frowns and ſcorns;
Rot me, Madam, I
Wiſh my rival joy!
Much joy! much joy of his horns.
Zounds! and furies! can I bear it?
Can I tamely ſtand the ſhock?
Sure——ten thouſand devils
Cannot prove
Half ſuch evils,
As to love.

Blood and thunder!
Wounds and wonder!
Who'd be under
Woman's love?

AIR XII.

Chloe. Dear Sir, be not in ſuch a paſſion;
There's never a maid in the nation,
Who wou'd not forego
A dull ſquire for a beau;
Love is not your proper vocation.
Lovem. Dear Madam, be not in ſuch a fury,
For from St James's to Drury,
No widow you'll find,
No wife of your mind.
Chloe. Ah hideous! I cannot endure you.
Ah! ſee him——how neat!
Ah! ſmell him——how ſweet!
Ah! hear but his honey words flow;
What maid in her ſenſes,
But muſt fall into trances,
At the ſight of ſo lovely a beau!

J. Sto. Ha, ha, ha! we are very much oblig'd to you, Madam.—Ha, ha!—ſquire Noodle, faith you make a very odd ſort of a ridiculous figure, Ha, ha!

Chloe. Not worth your lordſhip's notice.

Lovem. I wou'd adviſe you, my lord, as you love the ſafety of that pretty perſon of yours, not to let me find it at my return: for if I come within the ſmell of your pulvilio, I will ſo metamorphoſe your beauſhip———

J. Sto. Impudent ſcoundrel!

Chloe. I am frighten'd out of my wits, for I know he is very deſperate.

J. Sto. Oh, Madam! leave me to deal with him; I'll let a little light thro' his body.

Chloe. Ah! but my lord! what will be the conſequence of that?

J. Sto. Nothing at all, Madam.—I have kill'd half a dozen ſuch dirty fellows, and no notice taken of it.

Chloe. For my ſake, my lord, have a care of yourſelf.

AIR XIII.

Ah think, my lord! how I ſhou'd grieve,
To ſee your lordſhip bang'd;
But greater ſtill my fears believe,
Leſt I ſhou'd ſee you hang'd.
Ah! who cou'd ſee,
On Tyburn tree,
You ſwinging in the air!
A halter round
Your white neck bound,
Inſtead of ſolitaire.

J. Sto. To prevent all danger, then, let us be married this inſtant.

Chloe. Oh fy! my lord; the world will ſay I am a ſtrange forward creature.

J. Sto. The world, Madam, might be ſaucy enough to talk of you, if you were married to a private gentleman——but as you will be a woman of quality, they won't be ſurpris'd at any thing you do.

Chloe. People of quality have indeed privileges, they ſay, beyond other people; and I long to be one of them.

AIR XIV. White Joke.

Oh how charming my life will be,
When marriage has made me a fine lady!
In chariot, ſix horſes, and diamonds bright,
In Flanders lace and 'broidery clothes,
O how I'll flame it among the beaus!
In bed all the day, at cards all the night,
O! how I will revel the hours away!
Sing it, and dance it, coquette it, and play;
With feaſting, toaſting,
Jeſting, roaſting,
Rantum ſcantum, ſlanting janting,
Laughing at all the world can ſay. [*Exeunt.*

Jenny. This is ſomething like——there is ſome mettle in theſe London lords.——Our poor country ſquires will always put us to the bluſh of conſenting ——theſe ſparks know a woman's mind before ſhe ſpeaks it. Well, it is certainly a great comfort to a woman, who has done what ſhe ſhou'd not do, that ſhe did it without her own conſent.

Enter LOVEMORE.

Lovem. Ha! flown? Mrs Jenny, where's your miſtreſs?

Jenny. My miſtreſs, Sir, is with my maſter.

Lovem. Damnation! Where? Shew me this inſtant, and ——

Jenny. And what? It is ſurpriſing to me how a man of Mr Lovemore's ſenſe ſhou'd purſue a woman who uſes him ſo ill—when, to my certain knowledge, there is a woman in the world has a much juſter notion of his merit.

Lovem. Harkye, Mrs Minx, tell me where your miſtreſs is, or I'll ſqueeze your little ſoul out.

Jenny. Oh, murder! murder! help! murder!

Enter Mrs STOCKS.

Mrs Sto. Heyday! what's the matter? Who is this committing murder in my houſe? Who are you, Sir? What raſcal, what thief are you, Sir? Hey?

Lovem. This muſt be the bawd, by the politeneſs of her language. [*Aſide*.] ——Dear Madam, be not in ſuch a paſſion; I am no bilking younger brother; and tho' I'm no lord, you may find me a good cuſtomer, and as good a paymaſter as any lac'd fop in Chriſtendom.

Mrs Sto. Sir, I keep no ſhop——nor want any of your cuſtom.——What has he done to you, child? [*To* Jenny.

Jenny. He has done nothing to me, indeed, Madam, only ſqueez'd me by the arm, to tell him where my miſtreſs was.

Mrs Sto. And what have you to do with her miſtreſs?

Lovem. Why, faith, I am like to have nothing to do with her miſtreſs, without your good offices.—Look-ye, mother, let me have the firſt of her, and here are 500 l. at your ſervice..

Mrs Sto. What does the ſaucebox mean?

Lovem. Ha, ha, ha!

AIR XV.

When the candidate offers his purſe,
  What voter requires what he meant?
When a great man attempts to diſburſe,
  What little man aſks his intent?
Are you not then aſham'd,
When my miſtreſs I've nam'd,
And my purſe I've pull'd out,
Any longer to doubt
  My meaning, good mother?

Mrs Sto. Mother!——Oh, that ever I ſhould live to ſee this day!—I that have eſcaped the name of a whore in my youth, to be called a bawd in my old age.—Sirrah, ſirrah, the mother that bore you was not an honeſter woman.

Enter JACK STOCKS, *and* CHLOE.

J. Sto. What's the matter, Mrs Stocks?

Mrs Sto. Oh, Madam! had you heard how I've been abus'd upon your account—Here's a filthy fellow has offered me money to——

Chloe. What, dear Madam?

Mrs Sto. To procure your Ladyſhip——dear Madam.——

J. Sto. Sir, I deſire you would omit any farther ſolicitations to this lady, and on that condition, I forgive the paſt. This lady is now my wife.

Lovem. How! is this true, Chloe?

Chloe. Even as you've heard, Sir.

J. Sto. Here's a fellow won't take a lord's word for a wife.

Lovem. Henceforth, I will never take a woman's word for any thing.

J. Sto. Then I wiſh you'd take yourſelf away, Sir.

Lovem. Sir, I ſhall take the liberty of ſtaying here, becauſe I believe my company is diſagreeable to you.

J Sto. Very civil, faith!——Come, my dear, let us leave this ſullen gentleman to enjoy his ſpleen by himſelf.

Chloe. Oh, my dear lord! let's go to the Hall to ſee the lottery drawn.

J. Sto. If your Ladyſhip pleaſes.—So, dear ſquire, adieu. [*Exeunt* J. Stocks *and* Chloe.

Lovem. I'll follow her ſtill; for ſuch a coxcomb of a huſband will but give her a better reliſh for a gallant. [*Exit.*

Jenny. And I'll follow you ſtill; for ſuch uſage from one miſtreſs, will give you the better reliſh for another. [*Exit.*

SCENE III. GUILDHALL.

COMMISSIONERS, CLERKS, SPECTATORS, MOB, &c.

1 *Mob.* What, are they not drawing yet?

Sto. No, but they'll begin preſently.

AIR XVI. South-Sea ballad.

Sto. The Lottery juſt is beginning,
'Twill ſoon be too late to get an eſtate;
For Fortune, like dames fond of ſinning,
Does the tardy adventurer hate.
Then if you've a-mind to have her,
To-day with vigour purſue her,
Or elſe to-morrow,
You'll find to your ſorrow,
She'as granted another the favour,
Which to-day ſhe intended for you.

1 *Mob.* Never tell me, Thomas, it is all a cheat; what do thoſe people do behind the curtain? There's never any honeſty behind the curtain.

2 *Mob.* Harkye, neighbour, I fancy there is ſomebody in the wheels that gives out what tickets he pleaſes; for if you mind, ſometimes there are twenty blanks drawn together, and then two or three prizes.

1 *Mob.* Nay, if there be twenty blanks drawn together, it muſt be a cheat: for, you know, the man where I hired my horſes told me there was not quite ten blanks to a prize.

2 *Mob.* Pox take their horſes! I am ſure they have run away with all the money I have brought to town with me.

1 *Mob.* And yet it can't be all a cheat, neither; for you know Mrs Sugarſops of our town got twenty pound.

2 *Mob.* Ay, you fool; but does not her brother live with a parliament-man?

1 *Mob.* But he has nothing to do with the lottery, has he?

2 *Mob.* Ah, Land help thee!——Who can tell what he has to do with it?

1 *Mob.* But here's Mrs Sugarſops herſelf.

Enter Mrs SUGARSOPS.

Sug. How do you, neighbour Harrow?

2 *Mob.* Ah! Mrs Sugarſops! you are a lucky woman.

Sug. I wiſh you would make your words good.

2 *Mob.* Why, have not you got twenty pound in the lottery?

Sug. Ah Lud! that's all rid away, and twenty pounds more to it.——Oh! 'tis all a cheat; they let one get a little at firſt, only to draw one in, that's all. I have hired a horſe to-day, and if I get nothing by that, I'll go down into the country to-morrow.

1 *Mob.* I intend to ride no longer, nor neighbour Graze here neither.—He and I go halves in a ticket to-day.—See here is the number.

Sug. As I live, the very ticket I have hired myſelf!

2 *Mob.* Nay, that cannot be. It may be the ſame number, perhaps, but it cannot be the ſame ticket, for we have the whole ticket for ourſelves.

Sug. I tell you, we are both cheated.

Iriſh. Upon my ſhoul, it is a very brave luck, indeed; the deel take me but this will be brave news to carry back to Ireland.

1 *Mob.* Ay, there's he that has got the five thouſand pound which came up to-day.

2 *Mob.* I give you joy of the five thouſand pound, Sir.

Iriſh. Ah honey! fait, I have not got it as yet —— but, upon my ſhoul, I was within a ticket of it, joy.

3 *Mob.* I hope your worſhip will take care that my horſe be drawn to-day, or to-morrow, becauſe I ſhall go out of town next day.

Sto. Never fear, friend.

Sug. You are a fine gentleman, to let me the ſame ticket you had let before to theſe men here.

Sto. Pſhaw! Madam, it's impoſſible; it's a miſtake!

Sug. Here is the number, Sir; it is the ſame on both papers.

Sto. Ha! why Mr Trick has made a little blunder here indeed! However, Madam, if it comes up a prize, you ſhall both receive it.—Ha, ha, ha! d'ye think my horſes won't carry double, Madam?—— This number is a ſure card, for it was drawn a blank five days ago. [*Aſide.*

Enter COACHMAN.

Coach. Oh Sir! your worſhip has let me a very lucky horſe: it is come up twenty pound already. So if your worſhip would let me have the money—

Sto. Let me ſee, tickets are this day nineteen pound; and your prize is worth eighteen pound eighteen ſhillings; ſo if you give me two ſhillings, which are the difference, we ſhall be quit.

Coach. How, Sir! how!

Sto. Upon my word, friend, I ſtate the account right.

Coach. Oh, the devil! and have I given three pound for the chance of loſing two ſhillings more?

Sto. Alas, Sir! I cannot help ill fortune.————

You have had bad luck; it might have come up a hundred, or a thouſand, or ten thouſand.

Coach. Ten thouſand!—— ten thouſand devils take you all. Oons! if I can but once get a ſtock-jobber into my coach, if I don't break his neck!——

AIR XVII. Buff-coat.

In all trades we've had
Some good and ſome bad,
But a ſtock-jobber has no fellow;
To hell who would ſally,
Let him go to Change-alley,
There are fiends who will make his ſoul bellow.
The lawyer who's been
In the pillory ſeen,
While eggs his complexion made yellow:
Nay, the devil's to blame,
Or he'll own to his ſhame,
That a ſtock-jobber has no fellow.

Enter J. STOCKS *and* CHLOE. *Commiſſioners advance to open the wheels.*

J. Sto. Well, my dear, this is one of the moſt unaccountable rambles, juſt after matrimony!——but you ſhall always find me the moſt complaiſant of huſbands.

Chloe. Oh! my lord! I muſt ſee all the curioſities; the Tower, and the lions, and Bedlam, and the court, and the opera.

J. Sto. Yes, yes, my dear, you ſhall ſee every thing.——But the devil take me, if I accompany your ladyſhip. I think I will not talk to her of her fortune before to-morrow morning. [*Aſide.*

Chloe. I will not mention the ten thouſand pound before it's come up: it will be the prettieſt ſurpriſe! [*Aſide.*

J. Sto. So, the lottery is going to begin drawing.

AIR XVIII. Now ponder well, ye parents dear.

1 *Proc.* Number one hundred thirty-two!
2 *Proc.* That number is a blank.
1 *Proc.* Number one hundred ninety-nine!
2 *Proc.* And that's another blank.

1 *Proc.* Number ſix thouſand ſeventy-one!
2 *Proc.* That number blank is found.
1 *Proc.* Number ſix thouſand eighty-two.
2 *Proc.* Oh! that is twenty pound.

1 *Mob.* Oh! ho! are you come? I am glad to find there are ſome prizes here.

AIR XIX. Dutch ſkipper. Second part.

1 *Proc.* Number ſix thouſand eighty-two.
2 *Proc.* Is twenty pound, is twenty pound.
1 *Proc.* Number ſix thouſand eighty-two!
2 *Proc.* Oh! that is twenty pound.
You ſee 'tis all fair,
See nothing is there,
[*Pointing to the boys, who hold up their hands.*
The hammer goes down,
Hey Preſto! be gone,
And up comes the twenty pound.
Chorus. You ſee 'tis all fair, &c.

1 *Proc.* Forty-five thouſand three hundred and ten.
2 *Proc.* Blank.
1 *Proc.* Sixty-one thouſand ninety-ſeven.
4 *Mob.* Stand clear! ſtand clear! that's my ticket.
2 *Proc.* Blank.
4 *Mob.* Oh Lud! Oh Lud! [*Exit crying.*
1 *Proc.* Number four thouſand nine hundred ſixty.
2 *Proc.* Blank. [Chloe *faints.*
J. Sto. Help! help!

Sug. Here, here are ſome hartſhorn and ſalvolatile drops.

1 *Mob.* Poor lady! I ſuppoſe her ticket is come up blank.

2 *Mob.* May be her horſe has thrown her, neighbour.
[*The lottery continues drawing in dumb ſhew.*

Enter LOVEMORE *and* JENNY.

J. Sto. What's the matter, my angel?

Chloe. Oh!——that laſt blank was my ticket.

J. Sto. Ha, ha! and cou'd that give you any pain?

Chloe. Does it not you?

J. Sto. Not a moment's, my dear, indeed.

Chloe. And ean you bear the diſappointment without upbraiding me?

J. Sto. Upbraiding you! Ha, ha, ha! With what?

Chloe. Why, did not you marry me for my fortune?

J. Sto. No, no, my dear——I marry'd you for your perſon! I was in love with that only, my angel.

Chloe. Then the loſs of my fortune ſhall give me no longer uneaſineſs.

J. Sto. Loſs of your fortune! Ha! How! What! What!

Chloe. O my dear! I had no fortune but what I promis'd myſelf from the lottery.

J. Sto. Ha!

Chloe. So the devil take all lotteries, dreams, and conjurors.

J. Sto. The devil take them, indeed——and am I marry'd to a lottery-ticket, to an imaginary ten thouſand pound? Death! hell! and furies! blood! blunders! blanks!

Chloe. Is this your love for me, my lord?

J. Sto. Love for you! Dem you, fool, idiot.

Jenny. This it is to marry a lord——he can't be civil to his wife the firſt day.

Enter STOCKS.

Sto. Madam, the ſubſcriptions are ready——and if my lord——

J. Sto. Brother, this is a trick of yours to ruin me.

Sto. Heyday! What's the matter now?

J. Sto. Matter! why, I have had a Levant thrown upon me.

Lovem. The ten thouſand pound is come up a blank, that's all.

Sto. A blank?

J. Sto. Ay, a blank! do you pretend to be ignorant of it? However, Madam, you are bit as well as I am; for I am no more a lord, than you are a fortune.

Chloe. Now I'm undone, indeed.

AIR XX. Virgins beware.

Lovem. Now, my dear Chloe, behold a true lover,
Whom, tho' your cruelty ſeem'd to diſdain,
Now your doubts and fears may diſcover,
One kind look's a reward for his pain.
Thus to fold thee,
How bleſt is life!
Love ſhall hold thee
Dearer than wife.
What joys in chains of dull marriage can be!
Love's only happy, when liking is free.

As you ſeem, Sir, to have no overbearing fondneſs for your wife, I'll take her off your hands.—As you have miſs'd a fortune with her, what ſay you to a fortune without her?—Reſign over all pretenſions in her to me, and I'll give you a thouſand pound this inſtant.

J. Sto. Ha! pox! I ſuppoſe they are a thouſand pound you are to get in the lottery.

Lovem. Sir, you ſhall receive 'em this moment.

J. Sto. Shall I? Then, Sir, to ſhew you I'll be before-hand with you, here ſhe is—take her---and if ever I aſk her back of you again, may I loſe the whole thouſand at the firſt ſitting!

Chloe. And can you part with me ſo eaſily?

J. Sto. Part with you? If I was marry'd to the whole ſex, I'd part with 'em all for half the money.

Lovem. Come, my dear Chloe, had you been marry'd, ry'd, as you imagin'd, you ſhou'd have loſt nothing by the change.

Chloe. A lord! faugh! I begin to diſpiſe the name now, as heartily as I lik'd it before.

Commiſſioners, &c. cloſe the wheels and come forward.

AIR XXI.

Since you whom I lov'd,
So cruel have prov'd;
And you whom I ſlighted ſo true;
From my delicate fine powder'd ſpouſe,
I retract all my thrown away vows,
And give them with pleaſure to you.

Hence all women learn,
When your huſbands grow ſtern,
And leave you in conjugal want;
Ne'er whimper and weep out your eyes,
While what the dull huſband denies,
Is better ſupply'd by gallant.

Sto. Well, Jack, I hope you'll forgive me; for if I intended you any harm, may tickets fall, and all the horſes I have let to-day, be drawn blanks to-morrow!

J. Sto. Brother, I believe you; for as I do not apprehend you cou'd have got a ſhilling by being a rogue, it is poſſible yon may have been honeſt.

Lovem. Come, my dear Chloe, don't let your luck grieve you——you are not the only perſon has been deceiv'd in a lottery.

AIR XXII.

That the world is a lottery, what man can doubt?
When born, we're put in, when dead, we're drawn out;
And tho' tickets are bought by the fool, and the wiſe,
Yet 'tis plain there are more than ten blanks to a prize.
Sing Tantararara, fools all, fools all.

Sto. The court has itſelf a bad lottery's face,
Where ten draw a blank, before one draws a place;
For a ticket in law who wou'd give you thanks?
For that wheel contains ſcarce any but blanks.
Sing Tantararara, keep out, keep out.

Lovem. 'Mongſt doctors and lawyers ſome good ones are found;
But, alas! they are rare as the ten thouſand pound.
How ſcarce is a prize, if with women you deal,
Take care how you marry—for, oh! in that wheel,
(Sing Tantararara) blanks all, blanks all.

Sto. That the ſtage is a lottery, by all 'tis agreed,
Where ten plays are damn'd, ere one can ſucceed;
The blanks are ſo many, the prizes ſo few,
We all are undone, unleſs kindly you,
(Sing Tantararara) clap all, clap all.

EPI-

EPILOGUE.

Spoken by Miſs RAFTOR.

LUD! I'm almoſt aſham'd to ſhow my face!
Was ever woman like my Lady Lace?
Maids have been often wives, and widows ſoon,
But I'm maid, wife, and widow, all in one.
Who'd truſt to Fortune, if ſhe plays ſuch pranks?
Ten thouſand——and a lord! and both prove blanks?
A piteous caſe! and what is ſtill more madding,
To loſe ſo fine a Lord before I had him.
Had all been well till honey-moon was over,
It had been then no wonder to diſcover,
I a new miſtreſs, he a rival lover.
To wake ſo ſoon from ſuch delicious dreams,
Such pure, polite, extravagant fine ſchemes
Of plays, and operas, and maſquerades,
Of equipage, quadrille and powder'd blades,
And all blown up at once—Oh! horrid ſentence!
Forc'd to take up at laſt—with—faugh; an old acquaintance.
But hold——when my misfortunes I recal,
Agad! 'tis well I've any man at all.
Yet, ſince diſcarded once at ſuch ſhort warning,
This too may turn me off to-morrow morning.
If that ſhould happen, I were finely ſlur'd;
What ſhould I then do? What! why get a third.
Well, if he does, as I have cauſe to fear,
To-morrow night, gallants, you'll find me here.

A TA-

A

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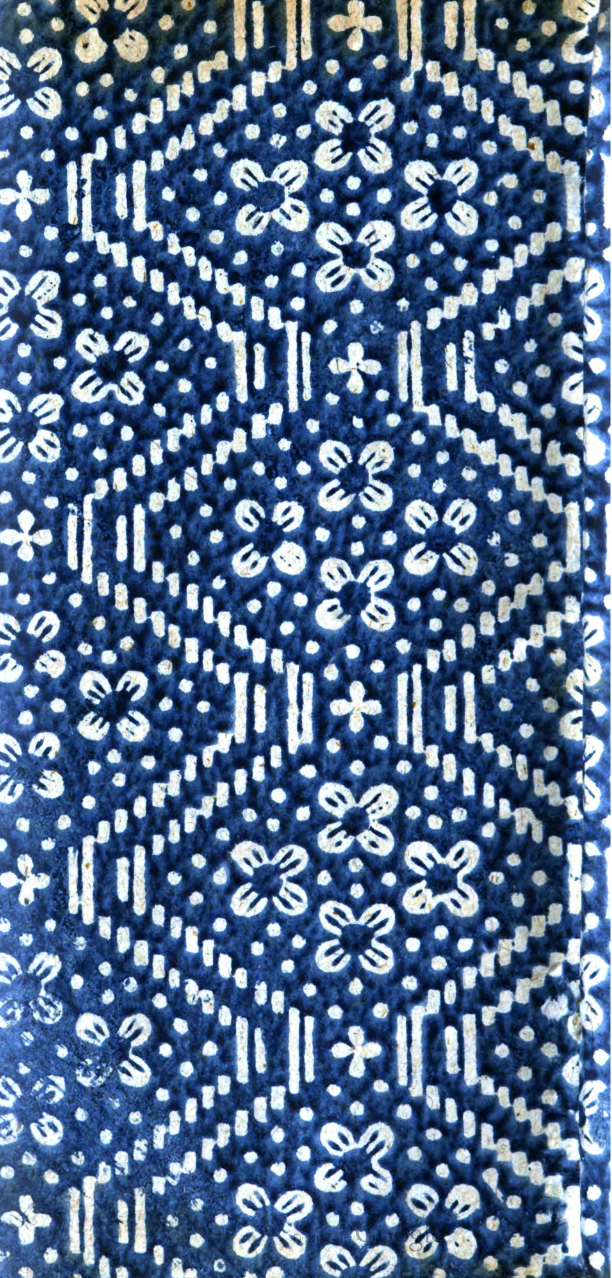

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